



Lebanon and Cyprus: Civilisations of the Eastern Mediterranean 2022

29 SEP – 19 OCT 2022

Code: 22241

Tour Leaders **Tony O'Connor**

Physical Ratings 

Join archaeologist Tony O'Connor and discover the rich history of the Eastern Mediterranean through the archaeology, art and architecture of Lebanon and Cyprus.

Overview

Join [Tony O'Connor](#) archaeologist, museum professional and experienced tour lecturer to discover the rich history of the Eastern Mediterranean through the archaeology, art and architecture of Cyprus and Lebanon. In Cyprus, Tony will be assisted by archaeologist [David Pearlman](#), who has worked on a number of excavations including the Late Bronze Age settlement at Ayios Dimitrios.

Lebanon

- Explore some of the world's oldest, continuously inhabited cities such as Beirut, Tyre, Sidon and Byblos; discover their diverse history from 5000 BC to the 21st century.
- Explore the coastal city of Tyre, famous for its purple dye (Tyrian purple) made from *Murex* sea snails and featuring extensive Roman ruins.
- View the wonderful Roman temple complex of Baalbek including the monumental Temple of Jupiter and the finely carved Temple of Bacchus.
- Explore the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Umayyad city of Anjar, a commercial centre at the crossroads of two important trade routes.
- Chart the history of the Phoenicians in archaeological sites like the Obelisk Temple at Byblos Archaeological Site, as well as remains in Lebanon's coastal cities.
- Explore Crusader Castles in Lebanon and Cyprus: the Citadel of Raymond de Saint-Gilles in Tripoli, the Sea Castle of Sidon, the Castle of Kolossi and the St Hilarion Castle near Kyrenia.
- In Tripoli wander the atmospheric Old City famous for its medieval Mamluk architecture including colourful souqs, hammams, khans, mosques and madrasas.
- Take a scenic drive through the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Ouadi Qadisha (Holy Valley) that is home to important early Christian rock-cut monasteries, and the Cedars of God, one of the last vestiges of extensive forests of Lebanon cedar.
- Navigate an underground river in the Jeita Grotto, karstic limestone caves spanning nearly 6 kilometres; see the longest stalactite in the world in The White Chamber.

Cyprus

- View Paphos' Tombs of the Kings, a UNESCO World Heritage Site containing well-preserved underground tombs and chambers used during the Hellenistic and Roman periods.
- At Kourion and Paphos, view Roman floor mosaics, considered among the finest in the world.
- View the sea stack at Petra tou Romiou, the 'Rock of Aphrodite', where myth says the goddess emerged from the sea as depicted in *The Birth of Venus* by Sandro Botticelli.
- Spend 2 nights in the Troödos Mountains featuring traditional villages, fine wineries and a collection of Byzantine frescoed churches and monasteries.
- Explore Bellapais Abbey immortalised by Lawrence Durrell in his famous *Bitter Lemons*.
- Delve into the history of Cyprus' antique trade in such goods as copper and view one of the world's oldest (4th c. BC) ships in Kyrenia's Ancient Shipwreck Museum.
- Investigate monuments of the medieval French Lusignan Kingdom of Cyprus and visit the walled city of Famagusta with Shakespeare's 'Othello Tower'.
- In North Nicosia view the Büyük Han, Cyprus' best-preserved Ottoman caravanserai.

21-day Cultural Tour of Lebanon & Cyprus

Overnight Lebanon: Beirut (2 nights) • Bekaa Valley (3 nights) • Beirut (1 night) • Byblos (3 nights); **Cyprus:** Paphos (4 nights) • Kalopanayiotis (2 nights) • Kyrenia (2 nights) • Nicosia (3 nights)

Overview

Join this fascinating tour of Lebanon and Cyprus which explores the complex history of the Eastern Mediterranean from Prehistory to this century through the archaeology, art and architecture of these countries.

Lebanon and Cyprus played a critical role in Mediterranean trade and conflict over three millennia. The ancient Phoenician city states of what is now Lebanon exported textiles dyed with Tyrian purple (made from the *Murex* sea snails) to Egyptian and Roman elites, and cedar wood to build temples, churches and palaces. Cyprus was known in antiquity for its rich seams of copper. The very word 'copper' derives from the Latin expression *Cuprium aes* (metal of Cyprus). It was an important supplier of not only copper, but also timber for shipbuilding as well as grain. Cyprus has the remains of the oldest trading vessels ever found beneath Mediterranean waters, a 4th-century BC Greek merchant ship now displayed at the Ancient Shipwreck Museum in Kyrenia. We explore great trading cities like Lebanon's Tyre and Cyprus' Salamis that prospered from these exports.

Both Lebanon and Cyprus have, at times, known local princely rule, and, at others, been absorbed into great empires such as Egypt, Assyria, Rome, Byzantium and the Ottoman Empire; most conquerors have left some physical mark on them. Both countries have a rich religious, mythic history. Lebanese Graeco-Roman temples fused Semitic deities like Baal with the Olympian pantheon. A Cypriot sea stack, Petra tou Romiou, was the birthplace of Aphrodite (Venus). Lebanon, in particular, has a number of the world's oldest continuously inhabited cities: Tyre, Sidon, Byblos and Beirut. In both countries, archaeological sites abound. Lebanon has Phoenician temples and the great Graeco-Roman monumental complex of Baalbek, as well as fine Arab palace precincts like Anjar. Along with precious Graeco-Roman sites, in Cyprus' Tröodos Mountains we visit Byzantine monasteries with magnificent frescoes. Early Christian cave monasteries nestle high in Lebanon's rugged Ouadi Qadisha (Holy Valley). During the Crusades, Lebanese territory became the Crusader County of Tripoli whilst Cyprus became the realm of the French Lusignan dynasty. Both countries have many Crusader castles, modified by Mamluks in Lebanon, Venetians on Cyprus, and the Ottomans in both countries.

Leaders



Tony O'Connor

Archaeologist, museum professional and highly experienced tour lecturer. Tony has led tours throughout the Middle East, Eastern Mediterranean and North Africa including programs to Lebanon, Sicily, Algeria & Tunisia.

Tony O'Connor, an archaeologist, museum professional and highly experienced tour lecturer, has led tours throughout the Middle East, Italy and North Africa, in particular, Algeria and Tunisia. With an honours degree in Ancient History and Archaeology (Manchester), he has worked extensively as a field archaeologist on major North African sites, including the city of Ptolomais in Libya and many Roman villas, small towns and military sites. His knowledge of the region is both profound and extensive, aided in part by the fact that he has made landscape surveys in Libya sponsored by UNESCO.

Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London and past committee member of the Society of Libyan Studies, Tony is a polymath, combining archaeological research with important roles in museums. He is a past committee member of the Society of Museum Archaeologists, Chairman of Museums of East Anglia, Chairman of the West Essex Archeological Group and a trustee of Museums Essex. He has been Deputy Keeper at the Verulamium Museum, St Albans, Keeper of Antiquities at the Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery, and Museum Heritage and Culture Manager, Epping Forest District Museum.

Tony's passion, however, is for designing, running and teaching on cultural tours. Along with his Algerian, Tunisian and Lebanese tours, his extraordinary experience in this field includes developing and leading tours to Syria, Northern Egypt and the Western Desert, Jordan, Libya, Calabria, Pompeii and the Bay of Naples, Northern Italy and Provence. ASA welcome such a passionate and experienced tour leader and lecturer to our team.



Itinerary

This itinerary provides an outline of the proposed daily program. The daily activities described in this itinerary may be rotated and/or modified in order to accommodate changes in museum opening hours, flight schedules etc. The tour includes breakfast daily, lunches and evening meals indicated in the detailed itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=lunch and D=dinner.

Beirut, Lebanon - 2 nights

Day 1: Thursday 29 September, Arrive Beirut

- Airport transfer for participants arriving on the ASA 'designated' flight
- Welcome Meeting
- Short Orientation Tour incl. The American University of Beirut (AUB) Archaeological Museum & the Mohammad Al-Amin Mosque
- Light Welcome Dinner

Our tour commences in Beirut. Participants taking the ASA 'designated' flight are scheduled to arrive in the late morning. Upon arrival, we transfer by private coach to the [Gefinor Rotana](#), located in the famous Hamra area. If you are travelling independently to Beirut, ASA can arrange a private transfer for you, or you should take an officially marked taxi to the hotel. After hotel check-in and time to relax, there will be a short welcome meeting and an orientation walk that will take in a tour of the museum of The American University in Beirut, the exterior of the National Archaeological Museum and the Mohammad Al-Amin Mosque. The American University of Beirut University museum is the third oldest museum in the Near East, after Cairo and Istanbul. It has collections from 7 countries: Lebanon, Syria, Cyprus, Egypt, Palestine, Iraq, and Iran. The Mohammad Al-Amin Mosque, inaugurated in 2008, follows the style of Ottomans monumental mosque architecture. This evening we shall dine together at the hotel. (Overnight Beirut) D

Day 2: Friday 30 September, Beirut – Tyre – Saïda – Beirut

- Al Bass & Al Mina archaeological sites, Tyre (UNESCO World Heritage Sites)
- Temple of Eshmoun, Saida
- Sea Castle, Saida
- Saida Souq

Today we visit the Phoenician cities of Tyre and Sidon. Tyre is one of the world's oldest continuously inhabited cities and legendary birthplace of Europa and Carthage's founder Dido (Elissa). Tyre, from the Greek *Tyros*, originally occupied an island with mainland suburbs. Alexander the Great built a causeway to it when besieging it. This expanded laterally over time, so that today the 'island' is the seaward end of a peninsula. Tyre passed to the Ptolemies and finally to the Seleucids. Under the Roman Empire it became one of the earliest centres of Christianity. Throughout antiquity and in the early Middle Ages it produced purple 'Tyrian dye'. It was taken by the Arabs in 638 and by the Crusaders in 1124. When Mamluk Al-Malik al-Ashraf took the city (1291) he dismantled its fortifications. The Ottomans conquered the region in 1516-1517. Tyre both welcomed Palestinian refugees and suffered greatly during Israel's attack on Hezbollah in the 1980s.

We shall first visit Tyre's large Al Bass archaeological site. Near its entrance is a vast funerary complex containing many ornate sarcophagi and tombs. It is flanked by a well-preserved Roman road that stretches through an impressive 20m-high monumental Hadrianic archway. Beyond is a huge Roman hippodrome (2nd c. AD) that could hold more than 20,000 spectators. We next visit the Al Mina site (3rd millennium BC). It has a columned street paved with geometrical Roman and Byzantine mosaics, the remains of a large public Roman bathhouse (2nd or 3rd c. AD) and a 4th-century rectangular arena.

We then visit the Temple of Eshmoun near Saida. This is Lebanon's only Phoenician site with structures standing higher than their foundations. Begun in the 7th century BC, the temple complex was devoted to Eshmoun, god of Sidon. The site's highlight is the throne of Astarte, flanked by two winged sphinxes. There are also a Roman villa and a Byzantine church, both with interesting mosaics.

Sidon, known locally as *Sayda* or *Saida* is Lebanon's third-largest city. The Phoenician name *Sidun* ('fishing town') was Hellenised as *Sid n* and then Latinized by the Romans to *Sidon* (modern Arabic *Sayda*). Archaeologists have determined six levels of the ancient city. Sidon II dates to the Acheulean era (1.5 million-200,000 BC), whilst Sidon III dates just prior to the invention of pottery (c. 8000 BC). Sidon was one of the most important and oldest Phoenician cities. Sidon's glass manufacturing industry and production of Tyrian purple dye from the *Murex trunculus* shell were vast. It was conquered at times by the Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Persians, Alexander the Great (333 BC), and finally by the Romans. The magnificent Alexander Sarcophagus, Lycian Tomb and Sarcophagus of the Crying Women in Istanbul's Archaeological Museum were discovered in Sidon's necropolis. The Romans built a theatre and other major monuments in the city. The Arabs conquered Sidon in 636. King Baldwin I of Jerusalem (1058-1115) and King Sigurd I of Norway (1090-1130) captured it in 1110. It became the court of the Lordship of Sidon and remained an important Crusader base until it was finally destroyed by the Muslims in 1249. The Ottomans captured Sidon in the early 16th century and made it the capital of the Sidon *Eyalet* (province). After World War II, Sidon grew to be a major city of independent Lebanon. A number of Palestinian refugees were settled here in 1948.

After lunch in a local restaurant, we visit the 13th-century Crusader Sea Castle constructed on a small island connected to the mainland by a narrow 80-metre Mamluk walkway. The castle was built on the site of a temple to Melqart, the Phoenician version of Heracles. The invading Mamluks, partly destroyed and subsequently rebuilt it adding the causeway. The castle later fell into disuse, but was again restored in the 17th century by the Druze Emir Fakhreddine II. The present castle complex consists primarily of two towers connected by a wall. Roman columns reinforced its outer walls. The better preserved rectangular west tower

has a large vaulted room scattered with carved capitals and cannonballs. A winding staircase leads up to its roof, where there is a small, domed Ottoman mosque. The east tower was built in two phases. The lower section dates to the Crusader period, while the upper level was built by the Mamluks.

Before returning to Beirut we shall also make a brief visit to Saida's picturesque vaulted souq. (Overnight Beirut) BL

Bekaa Valley, Lebanon - 3 nights

Day 3: Saturday 1 October, Beirut – Bekaa Valley

- Downtown Beirut including archaeological zone and remains of Roman Berytus (Roman Baths)
- National Museum of Beirut

Beirut (pop. Greater Beirut 2.2 million) is the nation's capital, Lebanon's largest city and its main seaport. 'Beirut' derives from the Arabic *Bayrut* which in turn derives from the Phoenician *Berot* or *Birut* ('wells'). Beirut is also one of the world's oldest cities, inhabited for more than 5000 years. Several prehistoric archaeological sites lie within its urban area, revealing flint tools dating from the Middle Palaeolithic and Upper Palaeolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age. Archaeologists have classified areas in different parts of the city, Beirut I to Beirut VII. The Phoenician port of Beirut is now buried under the city. In 104 BC, the Phoenician city was destroyed by the Seleucid Diodotus Tryphon. Seleucid *Laodicea* was rebuilt on a conventional Hellenistic plan. It lies under the modern city. The Romans built several bath complexes, colonnaded streets, a circus and theatre, and residential areas. Muslim armies conquered the city in 635 AD. Amir Arslan bin al-Mundhir's Principality of Sin el-Fil (759) became Principality of Mount Lebanon, the basis of today's Lebanon. From 1110 to 1291, the Lordship of Beirut became part of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. John of Ibelin, Lord of Beirut (1179-1236) rebuilt the city after battles with Saladin. Ottoman Beirut slowly declined to a small town (pop. c. 1000) until, after 1850, it developed close commercial and political ties with European imperial powers, particularly France. European interests in Lebanese silk and other export products transformed the city into a major port and commercial centre. Maronite Christian refugees fleeing fighting on Mount Lebanon and in Damascus settled in Beirut, altering its ethnic composition, sowing the seeds of future ethnic and religious troubles. Beirut, modernised in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and under the French Mandate (1918-1943), became Lebanon's capital city, benefitting as a banking haven during the Persian Gulf oil boom. Today, Beirut is one of the most cosmopolitan and religiously diverse Middle Eastern cities with significant Muslim and Christian communities and 18 recognised religious groups.

We shall first follow a special Beirut Heritage Trail tour presenting 5000 years of the city's history. This will include a visit to the ruins of the Roman Baths of Berytus. After lunchtime at leisure we visit the National Museum of Beirut, Lebanon's principal archaeological museum, with some 1300 exhibits ranging from Prehistory to the Mamluk period. Highlights include Phoenician gilded bronze figurines from the Obelisk Temple in Byblos, human-faced Phoenician sarcophagi and a frescoed Roman tomb. There are exquisite ivory make-up boxes from Sidon and an Attic drinking vessel in the shape of a pig's head, a Roman marble head of Bacchus, Phoenician glass and Byzantine mosaics. After thoroughly exploring the museum we drive to Lebanon's famous Bekaa Valley where we stay three nights. (Overnight Bekaa Valley) BD

Day 4: Sunday 2 October, Bekaa Valley – Dekweh – Anjar – Niha – Bekaa Valley

- Roman Temple of Dekweh (Dakoue)
- Ancient city of Anjar (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Bekaa Valley Wine Trail: lunch at [Château Ksara](#)

- Lower Roman Temples of Niha

The Bekaa Valley, Lebanon's most important farming region, is located between Mount Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon mountains. A hundred and twenty kilometres long, it forms the far north eastern extension of the Great Rift Valley stretching as far as Mozambique. Two rivers originate in the valley, the Orontes flows north into Syria and Turkey, and the Litani flows south and then west to the Mediterranean. In antiquity, the Bekaa Valley served as a source of grain for Rome's Levantine provinces. Mount Lebanon's rain shadow blocks precipitation from the sea in the north. Pastoral nomads now graze their flocks in this more arid northern end. Wheat, corn, cotton, vines, fruit and vegetables are produced in the more fertile, better watered, southern parts.

We first drive to the nearby village of Dakoue to view its Roman temple which consists of a central courtyard and a front colonnade composed of three columns. This prostyle temple was converted into a church. The design of its church window, cornice and capital is unique in Lebanon.

We then visit the site of the city of Anjar, an 8th-century Umayyad foundation which served the caliphs as residence and an agricultural estate. It was a square, walled settlement, echoing a Roman *colonia*. The Umayyads used Roman and Byzantine architectural forms to create their elegant residence here. Anjar's partially rebuilt Grand Palace has a central courtyard surrounded by a peristyle. The almost square Small Palace has numerous ornamental fragments and a richly decorated central entrance. A Mosque is located between the two palaces. Anjar's baths follow Roman models. After exploring Anjar, we shall follow the Bekaa Valley Wine Trail and lunch at Château Ksara, Lebanon's oldest winery.

We end today by visiting Niha's Small Temple and Great Temple. The Small Temple (1st c. AD) was dedicated to the Syro-Phoenician goddess of fertility Atargatis, and her consort Hadaranes or Hadad, god of thunder, lightning and rain. The 20-metre-high Great Temple (2nd-3rd c. AD) was apparently used for a mysterious cult like that of the temple of Bacchus in Baalbek. The temple was also dedicated to Hadaranes and Atargatis, and their son. The east-facing temple sits on a large podium and is accessed through a three-part stairway leading to a portico of four Corinthian columns. The temple has a series of reliefs linked to mysterious rituals performed within it, related to birth, growth, death, and hope of an afterlife. The Great Temple interior has a *cella* and elevated *adytum* which held the statue of the god or goddess. A crypt beneath the *adytum* held items used during temple rituals. (Overnight Bekaa Valley) BLD

Day 5: Monday 3 October, Bekaa Valley – Baalbek – Bekaa Valley

- The Graeco-Roman city of Baalbek (UNESCO World Heritage Site) *

Today, subject to DFAT advice*, we shall visit the majestic ruins of Baalbek which were inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1984. The Phoenicians worshipped the sun god Baal here, hence its name, Baalbek ('City of Baal'). Although the Phoenicians were driven out of Tyre, Sidon and Baalbek to the North African colony of Carthage (Tunisia), in recognition of the importance of the worship of Baal in Baalbek, its later Greek masters renamed it Heliopolis, the 'City of the Sun'. Like many of the classical cities of Syria and Jordan, Baalbek actually reached its height in the Roman period as a result of the huge commercial network created by the Mediterranean. The Greek acropolis, the vast Temple of Jupiter Heliopolis (once the largest in the world at 22.9m high), the Temple of Bacchus, and the many other civic buildings dotting the site provide a fine example of the synthesis between Semitic and Graeco-Roman culture. (Overnight Bekaa Valley) BLD

[Beirut, Lebanon - 1 night](#)

Day 6: Tuesday 4 October, Bekaa Valley – Beiteddine – Deir El Qamar – Beirut

- Beiteddine Palace
- Village of Deir El Qamar

The Chouf Mountains, the southernmost part of the Mount Lebanon Range, have a distinct geographical, cultural and ethnic identity. Its lush green vegetation, undulating terrain and cultivated fields of apples, grapes and olives are dotted with numerous picturesque villages. This is the heartland of both the Maronite Christian and Druze communities who fled persecution and sectarian rivalry. They have preserved their traditions.

This morning we visit the Beiteddine Palace built in the early 19th century by Emir Bechir Shihab II, Ottoman-appointed governor of the region. The palace's museum displays a significant collection of Byzantine mosaics, the majority of which, dated to the 5th and 6th centuries and originate from the site of the coastal city of Jieh, ancient Porphyreon.

We enjoy a group lunch and then explore the contemporary town of Deir al-Qamar, noted for its Ottoman architecture, mainly from the reign of the Druze Fakhreddine Maan II (1572-1635). (Overnight Beirut) BL

Byblos, Lebanon - 3 nights

Day 7: Wednesday 5 October, Beirut – Nahr el-Kalb – Byblos

- Commemorative stelae of Nahr el-Kalb (inscriptions and rock reliefs)
- Church of St John the Baptist, Byblos
- Byblos Archaeological Park: Crusader Castle, City Ramparts, Royal Tombs, Roman Theatre, Obelisk Temple, Temple of Resheph & Temple of Baalat Gebal (UNESCO World Heritage Site)

Today we drive north along the coast to the fishing port of Byblos which features an ancient harbour, medieval town, Crusader castle and an atmospheric archaeological site. En route we make a short visit to view the *stelae* of Nahr el-Kalb, a group of over 20 Egyptian, Neo-Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, Greek, Roman, Arab and Mamluk inscriptions and rock reliefs carved into the limestone around the estuary of the *Nahr el-Kalb* (Dog River).

Byblos was probably first settled between 8800 and 7000 BC and inhabited permanently from 5000 BC. Archaeologists have identified five prehistoric strata here: Early Neolithic (c. 6400-5800 BC), Middle Neolithic (5800-5300 BC), Late Neolithic (5300-4500 BC), Early Chalcolithic (4500-3600 BC) and Late Chalcolithic (3600-3100 BC) corresponding to the Early Bronze Age. From the late 3rd millennium BC are the remains of well-built houses of uniform size. The first settlement occupied the seaward slope of the larger of two hills separated by a watered valley. The original settlement then spread down into the valley, providing fertile soil and a protected harbour. During the Egyptian Old Kingdom (2575-2150 BC), wealthy Byblos was virtually an Egyptian colony.

In the 11th century BC, Byblos became the foremost city of Phoenicia. The Phoenician city was known to the Greeks as *Býblos* and to the Romans as *Byblus*. From Alexander the Great's conquest (332 BC) there is abundant evidence of trade with other Mediterranean countries. During the Graeco-Roman period, the Temple of Resheph, dedicated to the Canaanite war god, was rebuilt and the city became a centre of the cult of Adonis. In the 3rd century, a small theatre was constructed. With the rise of Christianity, a bishopric was established. With the Arab conquest, trade with Europe ceased. The First Crusade (1098), however, brought prosperity. Ruled by the Genoese Embriaco family, Byblos (known locally as Jbeil) became part of

the Crusader County of Tripoli in the 12th and 13th centuries (as Gibelet). The remains of their castle are among the town's most impressive monuments. Despite conquest by Saladin in 1187 and Baibars in 1266, it remained in Embriaco possession until around 1300.

The Crusaders commenced the construction of the Romanesque Church of St John the Baptist in 1115, on the ruins of a pagan temple. It was given to the Maronite Christians by the Druze Emir Youssef Shihab around 1776, and was rededicated to St John-Marc, the city's patron saint. The unusual, domed, open-sided baptistery projects from its north wall. The church windows are also slightly pointed, a feature of Cistercian proto-Gothic architecture.

The Byblos Archaeological Park is dominated by the 12th-century Embriaco family's moated castle which houses the Byblos site museum. There are panoramic views over the ruins and harbour from the castle's rooftop. The atmospheric park also includes the remains of city ramparts dating from the 3rd and 2nd millennium BC, several temples and a Roman theatre overlooking the sea. The so-called Temple of the Obelisks (1600-1200 BC), was moved by archaeologists to its present location so that the 'L- Shaped Temple' (2700 BC) beneath it could be dug. The temple's largest obelisk represents the presiding deity and the many small surrounding obelisks were religious offerings. The sanctuary contained many bronze and gold-leaf human figurines now in the National Museum of Beirut. The Temple of Baalat Gebal, the city's goddess, was constructed around 2700 BC. The necropolis (2nd millennium BC) contains tombs of Byblos' kings. Phoenician King Ahiram's grandiose tomb (850 BC) is now in the National Museum of Beirut. Ain el-Malik, 'The King's Spring' is a large, 20 metre-deep, cavity accessible by spiral stairs. It once supplied the city with water. Byblos' small Roman theatre was built around 218 AD. In the southeast section of the historic city is an old market with cobblestone streets and traditional architecture. (Overnight Byblos) BL

Day 8: Thursday 6 October, Byblos – Ouadi Qadisha (Holy Valley) – Byblos

- Qadisha Valley (UNESCO World Heritage Site) incl. Monastery of Mar Lishaa & Monastery of St Anthony of Qozhaya
- Forest of the Cedars of God (UNESCO World Heritage Site)

Today we drive to the spectacular Ouadi Qadisha (Qadisha Valley), one of the most important sites of the world's earliest Christian hermitages and coenobite cave monasteries. The Qadisha Valley is located at the foot of Mount al-Makmel and West of the Cedars of God. The Holy River Qadisha runs through the valley. Near the caves are numerous terraces, on which the hermits, monks and local peasants grew grain. We shall visit the Mar Lishaa Monastery which features an 8th-century icon of St Elisha and the working Monastery of St Anthony of Qozhaya which was the Maronite see in the 12th century.

We also visit the Cedars of God, located on Mount al-Makmel, at between 1900 and 2050 metres. This is the last vestige of antique forests where the rare *Cedrus libani* still grows. The cedars were valued construction materials throughout the Eastern Mediterranean; the wood was prized by Egyptians for shipbuilding. (Overnight Byblos) BL

Day 9: Friday 7 October, Byblos – Tripoli – Batroun – Byblos

- Citadel of Raymond de Saint-Gilles (Crusader Fortress of Tripoli)
- Tripoli's Labyrinthine Souq featuring medieval Mamluk architecture: Mansouri Great Mosque, Madrasa Al Qartawiyya, Khan Al Khayyatin, Khan Al Misriyyin, Hammam Al Jadid, Hammam Ezzedine, Souq Al Attarin
- Mseilha Fort, Batroun
- Batroun's Old Port & Phoenician Sea Wall

This morning we drive to Tripoli, Lebanon's second largest city and northernmost seaport. The centre of (Mamluk) Tripoli lies inland from the port city of El Mina, the original Phoenician city (9th c. BC). Finds here include skeletal remains of ancient wolves, eels and gazelles, part of the ancient southern port quay, grinding mills, different types of columns, wheels, bows and a Hellenistic necropolis. The Greeks gave it its present name, *Tripolis* ('three cities'). Under the Hellenistic Seleucids, Tripoli became a naval shipyard and centre of the cedar trade. The Romans and later Byzantines built many public buildings. The 551 Beirut earthquake destroyed the Byzantine city. Under Umayyad rule, Tripoli became a commercial and shipbuilding centre, the main port of Damascus. It achieved semi-independence under the rule of the North African Shi'a Fatimids and became a centre of learning. The Crusaders besieged the city for 9 years until it fell in 1109. The city became capital of the Crusader County of Tripoli. In 1289, the Mamluk sultan Qalawun captured Tripoli, destroying El Mina port. The Mamluks subsequently built a new inland city. The Mamluk city exported candy, loaf and powdered sugar to Europe and produced citrus fruits, olive oil, soap, cotton and silk, especially velvet. Tripoli has the highest number of Mamluk monuments after Cairo. During Ottoman period (1516-1918), the city was the provincial capital of the *Eyalet* of Tripoli.

We begin our day by visiting the castle of Raymond de Saint-Gilles, Lebanon's largest Crusader castle. The original castle burnt down in 1289 and was rebuilt in 1307-08 by Emir Essendemir Kurgi. Over its massive Ottoman gateway is an engraving of Süleyman the Magnificent who had ordered its restoration. We shall next wander through Tripoli's labyrinthine *souq* with its fine Mamluk monuments. We visit the Mansouri Great Mosque, the Madrasa Al Qartawiyya, the Khan Al Khayyatin, Khan Al Misriyyin, Hammam Al Jadid and Hammam Ezzedine and the Souq Al Attarin.

After exploring Tripoli and enjoying lunch in a local restaurant, we drive to coastal Batroun. On the way, we stop to view the Mseilha Fort, a fortification built on a long, narrow limestone rock near the Nahr el-Jawz River in the 17th century by Emir Fakhreddine II to guard the route from Tripoli to Beirut.

The Phoenicians established Batroun on the southern side of a promontory. The Romans made it part of *Phoenicia Prima* province. In ancient times it was a busy port. In 551 AD it was levelled by an earthquake and mudslides. Many historians believe the large natural harbour was formed at this time. We view the remains of Batroun's original Phoenician sea wall. Originally a natural structure composed of petrified sand dunes, it was reinforced gradually by the Phoenicians with rocks. The wall as it stands today took its present shape in the 1st century BC. It is 225 meters long and 1 to 1.5 meters thick. Parts of it have crumbled, but what remains still stands as a bulwark against the sea for the residents of the ancient city. After exploring Batroun, we return to Byblos. The evening in Byblos will be at leisure. (Overnight Byblos) BL

Paphos, Cyprus - 4 nights

Day 10: Saturday 8 October, Byblos – Jeita Grotto – Larnaca – Paphos

- Jeita Grotto: karstic limestone caves
- Flight A3567 from Beirut to Larnaca 1450-1530

This morning, before flying to Cyprus, we take a tour of the incredible Jeita Grotto situated in the Nahr el-Kalb valley. Two separate, interconnected, karstic limestone caves span an overall length of nearly 9 kilometres. Inhabited in prehistoric times, the lower cave can only be visited by boat. Its underground river provides fresh drinking water to over a million Lebanese. The upper galleries have a series of walkways to enable people safe access without disturbing the natural landscape. They house the world's largest known stalactite. The galleries are composed of a series of chambers, the largest of which peaks at a height of 12 metres.

After exploring the grotto, we will have lunch in Beirut then drive to the airport, where we shall take our flight to Larnaca. After clearing passport and customs, we make the 90-minute journey along the south coast to Paphos. (Overnight Paphos) BL

Day 11: Sunday 9 October, Paphos – Kourion – Kolossi – Paphos

- Roman site of Kourion
- Sanctuary of Apollo Hylates
- Crusader Fortress of Kolossi
- Cypriot 'Meze' at 7 St Georges Tavern

This morning we visit the Roman site of Kourion perched on a hillside with sweeping views of the Mediterranean. The archaeological remains of Kourion, one of the island's most important city-kingdoms in antiquity, are of the most impressive on the island. Excavations have unearthed many significant finds which can be viewed at the site. The city-kingdom was built on the hills of the area, overlooking and controlling the fertile valley of the river Kouris. According to archaeological finds, evidence suggests that Kourion was associated with the Greek legend of Argos of Peloponnese. The once-flourishing kingdom was eventually destroyed in a severe earthquake in 365 AD. The magnificent Graeco-Roman theatre was built in the 2nd century BC and extended in the 2nd century AD. East of the theatre are the remains of a prominent building, the 'House of Eustolios'. Whilst the villa was modest in size, it was well equipped and richly adorned. Its remains consist of four panels of beautiful 5th-century mosaic floors in the central room and a bathing complex that is located on a higher level north of the building. Along with the House of Eustolios, there are further impressive mosaic floors in the 'House of Achilles' and the 'House of the Gladiators', with the villas named after the scenes depicted on the mosaics. The remains of the Roman Agora are also visible at the site. The structure dates back to the early 3rd century. The Agora is surrounded by porticos with marble columns on both sides, whilst on its northwest side, is an impressive public bath and a small temple, the Nymphaeum, dedicated to the water nymphs. An early Christian basilica at the site dates back to the 5th century, with separate baptistery on the external northern side. The Stadium of Kourion lies 1km to the west.

We then visit the nearby Sanctuary of Apollo Hylates. During the ancient times, the Sanctuary was one of the most important religious centres in Cyprus, where Apollo was worshipped as 'Hylates', God of the woodlands. Archaeological investigation on the site suggests that the earlier evidence of the worship of Apollo dates back to the 8th century BC and continued until the 4th century AD. The Sanctuary was built in the late Classical or Early Hellenistic period over the ruins of the earlier archaic temple. The majority of the monuments as they can be seen today belong to the site's 1st century AD restorations.

In the afternoon, we shall visit the impressive Crusader fortress of Kolossi, headquarters of the Knights of St John (Knights Hospitaller) and its adjacent sugar mill before returning to Paphos.

Tonight, we dine at '7 St Georges Tavern' which specialises in traditional Cypriot 'meze', small portions of many different dishes, from cold starters, such as olives and pickled capers, to cooked dishes. The menu changes each day according to the seasonal availability of produce. The various small portions allow us to experience many flavours, textures and aromas in one meal. (Overnight Paphos) BLD

Day 12: Monday 10 October, Paphos

- Nea Paphos Archaeological Park (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Agia Kyriaki Chrysopolitissa (St Paul's Pillar)
- Archaeological Museum of the Paphos District

- Tombs of the Kings (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Lemba Prehistoric Village

We begin with a visit to the Nea Paphos Archaeological Park, which hosts a Prehistoric settlement and an Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine city. Among the site's most significant remains are four large, elaborate Roman villas. The House of Dionysos, the House of Aion, the House of Theseus and the House of Orpheus, all have superb preserved mosaic floors. A highlight is an Orpheus mosaic which depicts Orpheus and the Beasts together in a single panel. It is further distinguished by an inscription naming the person who commissioned the work, a feature not present in any other Roman mosaic in Cyprus. Excavations have also uncovered an agora, *asklepieion*, basilica, odeon, Hellenistic-Roman theatre, and the necropolis known as the 'Tombs of the Kings'.

We next visit the Church of Ayia Kyriaki (c. 1500 AD), constructed on the ruins of a 5th-century Early Christian basilica. It was built at the time of the Christianisation of the island and eventually became the first Cathedral of Paphos. The church ruins are covered with a mosaic floor with geometric motifs. The so-called Apostle Paul's Pillar sits beside Ayia Kyriaki. According to the Acts of Apostles, when Paul arrived to evangelise the area, Roman soldiers tied him to a column and scourged him 39 times. The Roman Governor Sergius Paulus subsequently converted to Christianity. The church was abandoned in the middle of the 7th century AD following Arab raids. It finally collapsed during an earthquake in 685 and *spolia* from it were used in later buildings as well as in lime kilns. A much smaller church, destroyed when the present church was constructed, had been erected within the ruins of the early Christian basilica. Beside the present church are the ruins of a two-storeyed Episcopal Palace.

Following some free time at leisure in Paphos harbour for lunch, we visit the Archaeological Museum. Due to reopen in 2020 after extensive renovation works, the museum displays artefacts that were unearthed in the Paphos region, dating from the Neolithic Age to 1700 AD. The collection includes skeletal remains recovered from 31 tombs near the eastern seafront of the ancient city of Nea Pafos and a tombstone with the Cypro-Syllabic script.

Next we visit The Tombs of the Kings. These subterranean tombs, dating back to the 4th century BC, are carved from solid rock, and were possibly the burial sites of Paphos' aristocrats and high officials (not kings) up to the 3rd century AD. Some of the tombs feature Doric columns and frescoed walls. Some imitate the houses of the living. The Paphians often including Rhodian amphorae among offerings in a burial. The manufacturing stamps on the handles of these *amphorae* allow experts to date them and therefore material from the same burial.

We end the day with a visit to the Lemba Experimental village. This long-term project from the University of Edinburgh is a reproduction of a Chalcolithic village on Cyprus. First devised and set up in 1982 as a project of archaeological research, it was founded on land adjacent to the excavations carried out at Lemba (1976-1983). The project has grown considerably and now includes experiments regarding the study of building materials, pyrotechnology, pottery firing and prehistoric cooking methods to name but a few. (Overnight Paphos) B

Day 13: Tuesday 11 October, Paphos – Petra tou Romiou – Kouklia – Paphos

- Petra tou Romiou ("Rock of the Roman" or "Aphrodite's Rock")
- Sanctuary of Aphrodite at Palaipafos & Archaeological Museum, Kouklia (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Afternoon at leisure

We begin today with a visit to Petra tou Romiou ('Rock of the Roman') also known as 'Aphrodite's Rock', a sea stack (vertical outcrop in the sea). Attached to the 'Rock' are a number of legends. One claims it to be the birthplace of the goddess Aphrodite (Venus). Gaia (Mother Earth) asked her son, Cronus, to mutilate his father, Uranus (Sky). Cronus cut off Uranus' testicles with his scythe and threw them into the water, which fertilised the sea, producing Aphrodite. Aphrodite attracted a large cult following in Paphos, evident from the Sanctuary of Aphrodite in Old Paphos (*Palaipafos*), Kouklia. Another legend associates a nearby beach as the site where the Achaeans came ashore on their return from Troy. The present name *Petra tou Romiou* associates the place with the exploits of a hero, Diogenes, half-Byzantine and half-Arabic, hence his name Diogenes (two-blood). This Christian purportedly hurled a huge rock from the Troödos Mountains to ward off the invading Muslims. A nearby rock is called the *Saracen Rock*.

We then visit the site of the Sanctuary of Aphrodite at Palaipafos (Kouklia) and its museum. This is the most famous of the Ancient Greek Goddess' sanctuaries. Its remains date back to the 12th century BC. It remained a place of worship until the 3rd to 4th centuries AD. The site includes two groups of buildings. The first, the Late Bronze Age shrine of Aphrodite, consists of an open court (*temenos*), surrounded by a monumental wall comprised of enormous (cyclopean) limestone blocks. Its western and part of its south side are preserved along with a hall, which housed a conical *baetyl* (sacred stone) in its centre symbolising the Goddess's power. A *baetyl* also adorned the second group, a Roman shrine, erected c. 100 AD. Of other Roman remains on the site, only the *triclinium* (dining room) remains of the 'House of Leda' but it has an outstanding mosaic floor (2nd century AD) depicting Leda and the Swan (original in the Kouklia Museum). The Northeast Gate of Palaipafos occupied the *Marchellos* hill high above the city's residential areas. It was one of the city's strongholds. The city's first wall and gate buildings were erected in the early Archaic period (c. 750-700 BC). An imposing building (c. 500 BC) called the Palace of Hadji Abdulla, with narrow corridors, small rooms and heavy walls sits against the city wall's inner face. It was probably a Persian governor's residence. The Lusignan Manor House (13th c.) was built by the Lusignan kings as a centre of local administration where a royal official controlled the local sugar-cane plantations and refineries. After 1571, the manor became the administrative centre for the Ottoman Kouklia *chiflik*. Its rooms are arranged in four wings around a central open-air court. Parts of its medieval gate tower and east and south wings are incorporated into later Ottoman buildings. Its original Gothic hall is one of Cyprus' finest surviving Frankish secular monuments. The Ottoman east wing now functions as the local archaeological Museum with a rich variety of archaeological material dating from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Christian periods.

There are two versions of how Palaipafos was founded. One story tells that Agapenor, the King of Tegea (Peloponnesus), founded the city-kingdom on his way back from the Trojan War. A second legend tells that Kinyras, the local legendary king (12th century BC), was the founder and first High Priest of The Sanctuary of Aphrodite.

Following our visit we shall enjoy lunch at a local restaurant and then return to Paphos where the afternoon will be at leisure for you to enjoy the facilities of your hotel. (Overnight Paphos) BL

Kalopanayiotis, Cyprus - 2 nights

Day 14: Wednesday 12 October, Paphos – Agios Neophytos – Stavros tis Psokas – Cedar Valley – Kalopanayiotis

- Agios Neophytos Monastery
- Stavros tis Psokas Forest Station
- Cedar Valley
- Kykkos Monastery, Troödos Mountains

We begin today by a visit to Agios Neophytos Monastery, founded by Saint Neophytos in a small natural cave in 1159. The original *Engleistra* (cave hermitage) consists of three parts: the church of the True Cross, the cell of Neophytos and the Refectory. All three are carved into the steep rock face. The main body of the church is covered with wall paintings. The eastern wall has a moderately sized cross-shaped niche which once housed a wooden cross that contained a piece of the True Cross. Most of the paintings in the *Engleistra* follow traditional Byzantine church decoration like the Crucifixion and the Annunciation. However, there are some interesting deviations from the normal frescoes expected within, some verging on blasphemous.

Next we head north to the Troödos Mountains and stop at Stavros tis Psokas Forest Station in the heart of the Paphos Forest. Here we hope to see *agrina*, native mouflons. Mouflons were introduced to Cyprus during the Neolithic period, perhaps as feral domesticated animals, where they have naturalized in the mountainous interiors of the island over the past few thousand years, giving rise to the subspecies known as European mouflon (*Ovis orientalis musimon*).

Following a picnic lunch we continue our journey through the Cedar Valley, distinctive for its thousands of endemic *Cedrus brevifolia*, a close relative of the famous cedars of Lebanon.

The drive will lead us to Kykkos Monastery. The Holy Monastery of the Virgin of Kykkos, founded (c. 1100) by the Byzantine Emperor Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118), is located at an altitude of 1318 metres on the northwest face of Troödos Mountains. Nothing remains of the original monastery as it has been rebuilt many times. The monastery is nevertheless famed for its great icon, originally from Constantinople, that was donated by the Emperor Alexios III Angelos at the instance of a local hermit, Esaïas, and the local Byzantine governor Manuel Boutoumites, and prompted by the Virgin Mary, who appeared to the Emperor in a dream. For centuries locals have both revered the icon and attributed miracles to it. The icon has also been copied many times. It should not be looked at. Its top half is hidden behind a protective covering because whoever looks at it will be blinded. Flanking the icon are a bronze arm and a sword fish saw. The arm celebrates the story of a Turk who tried to light a cigarette from one of its vigil lamps and suffered a gangrenous arm. The saw reflects the gratitude of sailors who prayed to Our Lady of Kykkos during storms at sea. After this visit, we drive to Kalopanayiotis. This evening we dine together at the hotel. (Overnight Kalopanayiotis) BLD

Day 15: Thursday 13 October, Kalopanayiotis: Solea Valley

- St John Lampadistis & Byzantine Museum (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Byzantine Church of Agios Nikolaos tis Stegis (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Time at leisure, Kakopetria

We spend today exploring the diverse history of the Solea Valley. We begin with a visit to the monastery of Agios Ioannis Lampadistis, situated in the central Troödos in the valley of Marathasa on the east bank of the Setrachos River. In 1985, it was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List with nine other painted Byzantine churches of the Troödos range. The 11th-century *katholikon* (monastery church) is dedicated to Saint Herakleidios. The monastery functioned until the beginning of the 19th century. The *katholikon* is a domed cross-in-square structure. In the 12th century the chapel of Agios Ioannis Lampadistis (rebuilt 18th c.) was added to its north, above the Saint's tomb. In the middle of the 15th century the two churches were given a common narthex. During the second half of the 15th century a vaulted chapel was added to the north of that of Saint Ioannis. It became known as the 'Latin chapel' because it was built for the Latins (Catholics). Sometime between the 15th and the 18th century, a pitched timber and tiled roof was built across the whole complex. The wall-paintings of the southern church of Agios Herakleidios' apse include fragmentary 11th- and 12th-century scenes. The rest of the church was painted in the 13th and 14th

centuries. Frescoes include some rare images such as the depiction of the *Holy Cloth*. The narthex paintings are the work of an artist from Constantinople who fled to Cyprus after the fall of that city (1453). They echo the style of the Byzantine capital. The frescoes of the 'Latin' chapel, (c. 1500), are in the 'Italo-byzantine' style, the most complete set in this style in Cyprus. The *katholikon's* wooden *templon* screen (13th-14th c.), has imitation coats-of-arms. It is the oldest wooden *templon* in Cyprus. The relic of Saint Ioannis Lambadistis occupies a precious reliquary. Other monastic buildings include cells, auxiliary rooms and an oil press. One room houses icons from the monastery and other churches in the village of Kalopanayiotis.

We next visit the painted 11th-century UNESCO-designated church of Agios Nikolaos tis Stegis (St Nicholas of the Roof). The church is the only surviving Middle Byzantine *katholikon* in Cyprus. It had a typical Byzantine domed cross-in square plan. A narthex was added in the 12th century. It takes its name from the 13th-century wood and tiled pitched roof covering the original nave and narthex. Its interior walls are covered with frescoes painted over 600 years. The figure style in the first phase, 11th century, reflects the influence of Byzantine miniaturists of the Macedonian renaissance. These murals depict scenes from the *Life of Christ*, the *Raising of Lazarus*, the *Dormition of the Virgin*, and some isolated figures. The second phase, 12th century, includes more sophisticated frescoes in the southwest part of the church and the narthex. Most of the church's other frescoes date from the late 13th and 14th centuries. The *Crucifixion* and the *Resurrection*, the *Christ Pantocrator* in the dome, the prophets on its drum and the evangelists on its four pendentives, as well as life size saints in the nave, all date from the mid 14th century.

We shall spend the late afternoon exploring the winding streets of the picturesque medieval mountain village of Kakopetria, named 'bad rock' for the presence of boulders and rock outcrops above the village. We shall eat a group lunch at Kakopetria and an evening meal at our hotel. (Overnight Kalopanayiotis) BLD

Kyrenia, Cyprus - 2 nights

Day 16: Friday 14 October, Kalopanayiotis – Bellapais – Kyrenia

- Byzantine Church of Panagia tis Asinou (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Bellapais Abbey
- Home of Lawrence Durrell, Bellapais (exterior only)

Today we cross into North Cyprus. Before this we visit a third UNESCO listed painted church. The church of Panagia tis Asinou (1099), was once the *katholikon* of the Monastery of Forbion. It consists of two parts, the vaulted single-aisled nave and the later 12th-century narthex. The narthex has two semi-circular apses, a type influenced by Constantinople. From the 12th century a steep-pitched timber tiled roof was built over the church. No traces of the rest of the monastic buildings survive. The frescoes covering the church's interior vary in date. The earliest group (1105/6) in the apse and on the west wall, follows the Comnenian style of Constantinople, the artist's birthplace. This constitutes one of the most important examples of Byzantine art of this period. Alexios Komnenos I (1081-1118) had made Cyprus his most important military base in the North-eastern Mediterranean. In the 14th century the apse conch (half dome) collapsed and was rebuilt and redecorated. External buttresses were added and a little later, flying buttresses were constructed at the east end of the north wall. The narthex was decorated with mural paintings soon after its erection during the second half of the 12th century, and in 1332/3 it was redecorated in the French style with images of many donors. The church also has some 17th-century frescoes.

In the afternoon we visit the abbey and village of Bellapais, home for some years of Lawrence Durrell, who wrote about life in Cyprus between 1953 and 1956 in his book, *Bitter Lemons*. He mentions passing the time drinking coffee under the 'Tree of Idleness' in the village.

The Bellapais Abbey, ruins of an Augustinian monastery, was built in the 13th century. The site may have been the early residence of the Bishops of Kyrenia, as well as a place of refuge from Arab raids in the 7th and 8th centuries. Aimery de Lusignan founded the monastery around 1200 for the Canons Regular of the Holy Sepulchre, who had fled Jerusalem after its fall to Saladin in 1187. They called the monastery *Abbaye de la Paix* ("Abbey of Peace") from which the corrupted version of the name, Bellapais, evolved. The main building as it can be seen today was built during the rule of King Hugh III (1267-1284). The cloisters and the refectory were added during the rule of King Hugh IV (1324-1359). Following the Ottoman conquest of Kyrenia in 1571, the Ottomans expelled the Premonstratensians and gave the abbey to the Greek Orthodox Church of Cyprus, which they appointed as the only legal Christian church on Cyprus. The Church of Cyprus neglected the Abbey, which fell into disrepair. The 13th-century church is still in fine condition, and remains much as it was in 1976, when the last of the stoic Orthodox faithful had to leave. After exploring the village, we drive on to the historic town of Kyrenia, located on the north coast. (Overnight Kyrenia) BL

Day 17: Saturday 15 October, Kyrenia

- St Hilarion Castle (exterior only)
- Crusader Castle of Kyrenia
- Ancient Shipwreck Museum containing the wreck of a 4th-century BC Greek Merchant Ship
- Walking tour of Kyrenia Old Town
- Afternoon at leisure

This morning we drive out of Kyrenia to view Saint Hilarion Castle, situated on a high outcrop of the Kyrenia mountain range, commanding the road to Nicosia. It is the best-preserved of the three former strongholds in the Kyrenia mountains. The castle is named after an obscure saint who fled to Cyprus after the Arab conquest of the Holy Land and created a hermitage where the castle would later stand. From the 11th century, the Byzantines began the fortifications as a defence against Arab pirates raiding the coast. The Lusignans upgraded some sections as a summer residence. Much of the castle was dismantled by the Venetians in the 15th century.

At the east end of Kyrenia's old harbour stands a 16th-century Venetian castle, built on the remains of a Crusader fortification. It has a 12th-century chapel with reused late Roman capitals. The castle houses a very important Shipwreck Museum, whose treasure is a 4th-century BC Greek merchant ship, one of the oldest vessels ever recovered, with its cargo of millstones and wine *amphorae* from Kos and Rhodes. Its 14-metre hull, made of Aleppo pine sheathed in lead, is preserved in a specially controlled environment, together with its *amphorae*.

We shall then enjoy a walking tour of the Old Town of Kyrenia. Modest remnants of Kyrenia's long history are speckled throughout the lanes. Two of the major monuments are the Ottoman-era Aga Cafer Pasa Mosque and the dilapidated remains of 16th-century Chysopolitissa Church. There are also ancient Graeco-Roman tombs on the road leading to Archangelos Michael Church. During the Lusignan era, the town was protected by fortifications which were dismantled over the years and reused for other building works. The Round Tower on Ziya Rizki Caddesi next to one of the entrance ways into the neighbourhood is one of the few still-standing pieces of wall. At the eastern edge of the Old Town is St Andrew's Anglican Church, built in 1913 and still serving Kyrenia's Christian foreign resident community today.

The afternoon will be at leisure for you to explore the old cobblestoned town and dine at one of its many harbourside restaurants. (Overnight Kyrenia) B

Nicosia, Cyprus - 3 nights

Day 18: Sunday 16 October, Kyrenia – Salamis – Famagusta – Nicosia

- Ancient Greek Salamis
- Famagusta: St Nicholas Cathedral, Venetian Palace remnants & city walls

Today we drive from Kyrenia to the ancient Greek city of Salamis. This extensive site was founded, according to legend, at the end of the Trojan War. The port grew in importance around 1200 BC. At this time, the inhabitants of nearby Enkomi, whose harbour was silting up, developed Salamis as a major harbour for the export of Cyprus' famous copper. By the 8th century BC Salamis was the most important commercial centre on the island, and by the 6th century BC its wealth was enriching its Persian Imperial overlords. After the death of Alexander the Great, who had taken the island from the Persians in 333 BC, Cyprus was integrated into the realm of the Egyptian Ptolemies (295 BC). The site today has a number of important remains, including a theatre and gymnasium.

We then drive to Famagusta, a city which has developed a distinctly Levantine air since it was taken by Turkey in 1974. It is now well known for its jewellery, copper work and pottery. Founded around 274 BC on the site of an earlier Egyptian settlement, Arsinoe, Famagusta remained a small fishing village until it emerged as a port when Salamis, Cyprus' former capital, was destroyed. By 1300 Famagusta had become one of the chief emporia of the Eastern Mediterranean, with wealthy merchants and well-endowed churches. It prospered under the Lusignan dynasty who fortified it and built St Nicholas' Cathedral (now a mosque). It retains its ramparts and a castle overlooking its harbour. After 1400 Genoese and Venetian merchants settled here and it eventually became part of the great Venetian trading empire. In 1571, it fell to the Ottomans, who ruled here until 1878. We shall visit the old town with its beautiful Venetian Gothic palaces, the Nestorian Church of St George, and the citadel, now called 'Othello's Tower'. We shall also visit the Lala Mustafa Pasa Camii, once the Latin Cathedral of St Nicholas, the finest example of Gothic architecture on the island and throughout the Middle East. It was built between 1298 and 1326 and modelled on the Cathedral of Reims, in France.

After visiting Famagusta, we drive west to reach our hotel in Nicosia. (Overnight Nicosia) BL

Day 19: Monday 17 October, Nicosia – Khirokitia – Nicosia

- Neolithic Khirokitia (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Neolithic Kalavassos-Tenta
- Introductory walking tour of Nicosia: Venetian Walls, Old Archbishop's Palace, Cathedral of St John Theologian & Famagusta Gate
- Büyük Han & the Selimiye Mosque

This morning we visit the unique Neolithic site of Khirokitia (8000 BC) which comprises the ruins of tightly packed circular houses sited dramatically on the slopes of a hill. Here we encounter archaeological evidence of the beginnings of agriculture in this region and visit reconstructed houses for a glimpse of how Neolithic people lived. One of the most important archaeological sites in the eastern Mediterranean, Khirokitia is one of earliest examples of collective farming. Inhabitants grew crops, herded sheep and goats, and raised pigs in stone enclosures.

Next we visit the Neolithic Age settlement of Tenta situated a short distance from Kalavassos village (7000 BC). It is one of the most significant Neolithic settlements on the island, and is covered by a characteristic cone-shaped roof, which forms a contemporary architectural intervention in the landscape. According to local tradition, the name of the site goes back to 327 AD when St Helen, the mother of Constantine the Great, stayed in a tent ('tenta') in this location during her visit to the island following the discovery of the

Holy Cross in Jerusalem. The site of Kalavassos-Tenta was initially excavated in 1947. Together with Khirokitia, Kalavassos-Tenta provides evidence for the initial establishment, at the end of the 7th millennium BC, of sedentary communities on the island who originated from the neighbouring mainland. These communities developed an original civilisation: the Cypriot Aceramic Neolithic. The settlement is surrounded by walls and consists of a compound of buildings with simple circular or double circular ground plans built with sun-dried mudbrick or stone, or a combination of both. The roof was flat and was made of a wooden frame consisting of branches, reeds, pisé and earth. The roofs were principally flat but some buildings had domed roofs. The interior of the buildings had double rectilinear piers, which supported a partial upper wooden floor, hearths and benches. The plastered surfaces of the walls were occasionally embellished with painted decoration as in the case of one house where the wall-painting depicting two human figures with upraised hands has survived. The dead were buried beneath the floor of houses or in the open space between domestic buildings.

We return to Nicosia where lunch will be at leisure. In the afternoon, we walk through the old city, viewing its Venetian walls, Old Archbishop's Palace, Cathedral of St John Theologian and impressive Famagusta Gate.

We then cross the 'Green Line' to explore grand monuments of Cyprus' Ottoman past. We begin with a visit to the Büyük Han (Great Inn), built in 1572 by the first Ottoman governor of Cyprus, Muzaffer Pasha. Its architecture is similar to numerous Anatolian *hans*, with a courtyard surrounded by two floors of rooms. The lower rooms were used as shops, storage rooms and offices. The upper floor rooms served as lodging, each fitted with a fireplace with an octagonal chimney. In the middle of the courtyard a domed octagonal miniature mosque rests on eight columns with a fountain for ablutions beneath it. The British used the *han* as the Nicosia Central Prison. It was then used as a builders' yard. It was recently restored and is now a lively place with shops and art/photo galleries.

We also visit other key sites including the Selimiye Mosque, the Turkish-Cypriot community's main mosque, where the great festivals of Bayram are conducted. It was formerly the Cathedral of St Sophia (1209-1228), built over the ruins of a previous building. Stylistically, St Sophia resembles medieval French cathedrals. When it was converted to a mosque in 1570, it was re-orientated towards Mecca. The granite columns of the interior are Roman, probably from Salamis, from an earlier Byzantine building. (Overnight Nicosia) B

Day 20: Tuesday 18 October, Nicosia

- Cyprus Museum
- Afternoon at leisure
- Farewell Dinner

The Cyprus Museum is the island's main and largest archaeological museum, and charts the development of Cyprus' civilisation from the Neolithic Age to the Early Byzantine period (7th century). The museum's collections are comprised of finds from extensive excavations from all over the island that have helped the development of Cyprus' archaeology, as well as its research into the cultural heritage of the Mediterranean. The collections consist of pottery, jewellery, sculpture, coins, copper objects, and other artefacts, all exhibited in chronological order in the various museum galleries. Pieces typical of Cypriot culture – and of particularly important artistic, archaeological and historical value – include the cross-shaped idol of the Chalcolithic period, Early Bronze Age pottery from Vouni, Late Bronze Age golden jewellery from Egkomi, and the 1st-century BC statue of Aphrodite of Soloi. The museum building itself is also historic. Work on it commenced in 1908 and it was completed in 1924, when Cyprus was still a British colony. Several extensions were later added for the museum to become the building it is today.

The afternoon will be at leisure. We end today with a farewell evening meal. (Overnight Nicosia) BD

Day 21: Wednesday 19 October, Nicosia – Larnaca Airport (Tour Ends)

- Leventis Municipal Museum of Nicosia
- Walking tour of Larnaca: Church of St Lazarus and medieval castle
- Airport transfer to Larnaca Airport for participants departing on ASA's 'designated' flight

This morning we visit the Leventis Municipal Museum of Nicosia which displays an extensive collection of Cypriot works including archaeological artefacts, costumes, photographs, medieval pottery, maps and engravings, jewels, and furniture.

We then head south to Larnaca for a walking tour of the old town along the sea front to view the well-preserved architecture from the British colonial period, the medieval castle and the church of St Lazarus, where Lazarus was purportedly buried for the second and last time.

Then, those travelling on the ASA 'designated' flight will be transferred to the Larnaca airport. If you are not travelling on this flight, you may take a taxi or arrange a transfer with ASA, or stay on to see more of this fascinating country. Please contact ASA if you require further assistance. BL

Accommodation

Accommodation is in 4-and 5-star hotels, in twin-share rooms with en suite bathroom. Each hotel is centrally located within the cities that we visit, and has been chosen as the best available. Rooms for single occupancy may be requested – and are subject to availability and payment of the Single Supplement.

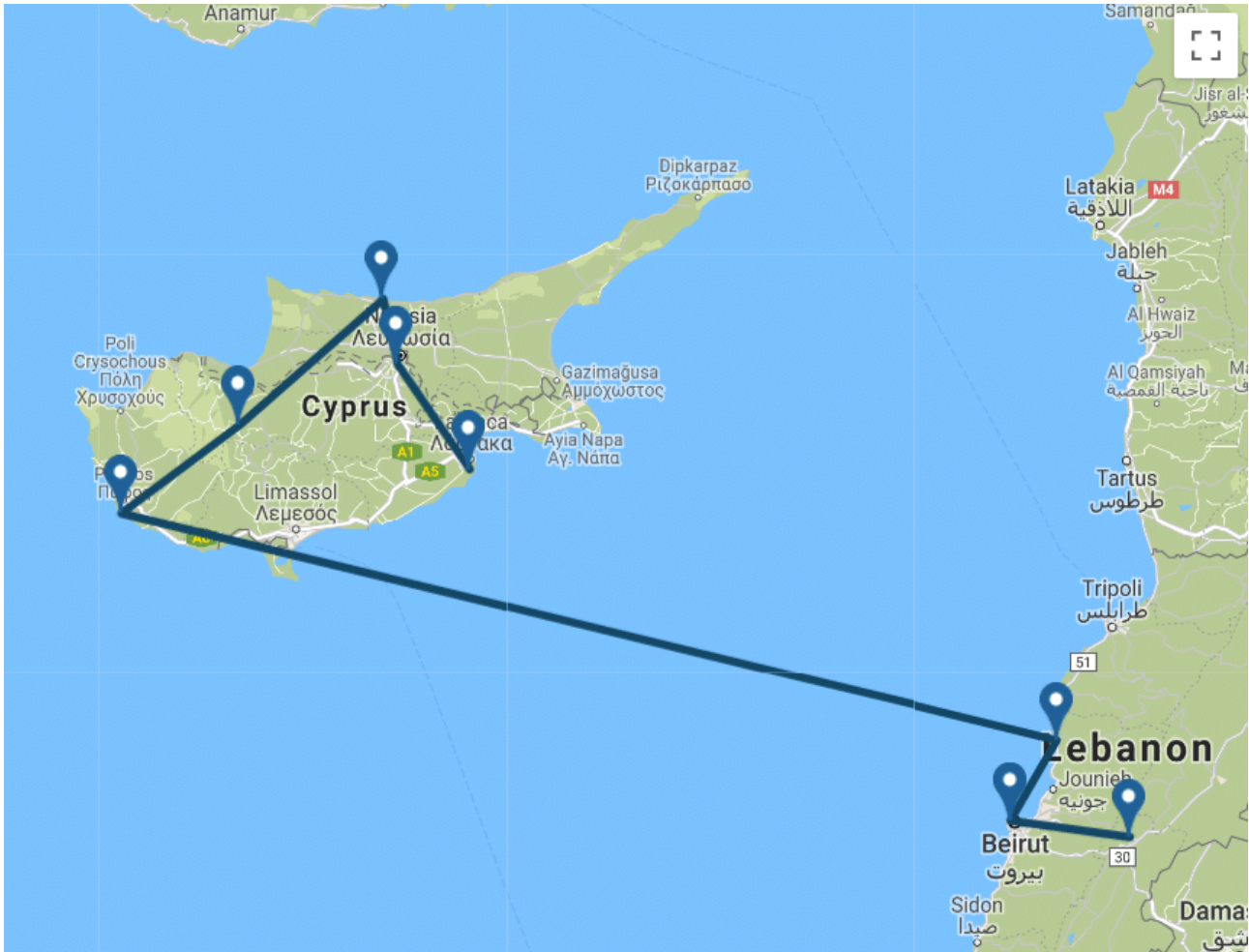
- Beirut (2 nights): 5-star Gefinor Rotana – a modern hotel located in the famous Hamra area in the centre of Beirut, close to all city attractions. www.rotana.com
- Bekaa Valley (3 nights): 5-star Grand Kadri Hotel – a historical landmark hotel located in the heart of the Bekaa Valley. www.grandkadrihotel.com
- Beirut (1 night): 5-star Gefinor Rotana – a modern hotel located in the famous Hamra area in the centre of Beirut, close to all city attractions. www.rotana.com
- Byblos (3 nights): 5-star Byblos Sur Mer Hotel – a boutique hotel overlooking the ancient harbour. www.byblossurmer.com
- Paphos (4 nights): 4-star Alexander The Great Beach Hotel – featuring a seafront location 150m from central Paphos. www.kanikahotels.com
- Kalopanayiotis (2 nights): 4-star Casale Panayiotis Traditional Village Hotel & Spa – nestled in the Marathasa Valley on the slopes of Troodos Mountains, this complex of traditional houses combine modern luxuries with traditional style. www.casalepanayiotis.com
- Kyrenia (2 nights): 5-star Arkin Colony – built in the Colonial and Ottoman styles, the hotel is located in the historic centre, 400m from the Shipwreck Museum. www.thecolonycyprus.com
- Nicosia (3 nights): 4-star Map Boutique Hotel – opened in late 2019, this new modern hotel is located 700m from the Byzantine Museum and 850m from the Cyprus Museum. www.maphotel.com.cy

Note: *hotels are subject to change, in which case a hotel of similar standard will be provided.*

Single Supplement

Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation in a single-occupancy room throughout the tour. In most hotels, this will be a double/twin room for single occupancy. The number of rooms available for single occupancy is extremely limited. People wishing to take this supplement are therefore advised to book well in advance.

Tour Map



Tour Price & Inclusions

AUD \$TBA Land Content Only – Early-Bird Special: Book before 30 September 2020

AUD \$TBA Land Content Only

AUD \$TBA Single Supplement

For competitive Economy, Business or First Class airfares please contact ASA for further information.

Tour Price (Land Content Only) includes:

- Accommodation in twin-share rooms with en suite bathroom in 4- and 5-star hotels
- Lunches and evening meals indicated in the tour itinerary where: **B**=breakfast, **L**=lunch & **D**=dinner
- Bottled water 2 x 500ml per day for excursions in Lebanon (available for purchase on the coach in Cyprus)
- Drinks at welcome and farewell meals. Other meals include bottled water only
- Airport-hotel transfers if travelling on the ASA 'designated' flights
- Transportation by air-conditioned coach
- Economy Class flight from Beirut to Larnaca Day 10
- Porterage of one piece of luggage per person at hotels (not at airports).
- Lecture and site-visit program
- Tour handbook
- National guides in Lebanon and Cyprus
- Entrance fees
- Tips for the coach driver, national guides and restaurants for included meals

Tour Price (Land Content Only) does not include:

- Airfare: Australia-Beirut, Larnaca-Australia
- Personal spending money
- Airport-hotel transfers if not travelling on the ASA 'designated' flights
- Luggage in excess of 20kg (44lbs)
- Travel insurance
- Visas (if applicable)



Physical Endurance & Practical Information

Physical Ratings 

The number of flags is a guide to the degree of difficulty of ASA tours relative to each other (not to those of other tour companies). It is neither absolute nor literal. One flag is given to the least taxing tours, seven to the most. Flags are allocated, above all, according to the amount of walking and standing each tour involves. Nevertheless, all ASA tours require that participants have a good degree of fitness enabling 2-3 hours walking or 1-1.5 hours standing still on any given site visit or excursion. Many sites are accessed by climbing slopes or steps and have uneven terrain.

This 21-day Cultural Tour of Lebanon and Cyprus involves:

- A moderate amount of walking at archaeological sites, many of which are extensive and unsheltered.
- Visiting sites where you will encounter steps, cobbled streets, rocky and uneven ground, slopes and steep walks.
- Extensive coach travel, sometimes on winding mountain roads; road conditions are variable.
- 4-and 5-star hotels with seven hotel changes.
- You must be able to carry your own hand luggage. Hotel portage includes 1 piece of luggage per person.

It is important to remember that ASA programs are group tours, and slow walkers affect everyone in the group. As the group must move at the speed of the slowest member, the amount of time spent at a site may be reduced if group members cannot maintain a moderate walking pace. ASA tours should not present any problem for active people who can manage day-to-day walking and stair-climbing. However, if you have any doubts about your ability to manage on a program, please ask your ASA travel consultant whether this is a suitable tour for you.

Please note: it is a condition of travel that all participants agree to accept ASA's directions in relation to

their suitability to participate in activities undertaken on the tour, and that ASA retains the sole discretion to direct a tour participant to refrain from a particular activity on part of the tour. For further information please refer to the ASA Reservation Application Form.

Practical Information

Prior to departure, tour members will receive practical notes which include information on visa requirements, health, photography, weather, clothing and what to pack, custom regulations, bank hours, currency regulations, electrical appliances and food. The Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade website has advice for travellers: www.smartraveller.gov.au

Booking Conditions

Making a Tentative Reservation before the tour price has been published

ASA INTENTION TO TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM

Some ASA tours fill almost immediately. Don't miss out! You can register your 'Intention to Travel' by completing this application and returning this to ASA with a AUD \$100.00 per person deposit. Once the tour price has been published, the itinerary and ASA Reservation Application Form will be sent to you. From the time you receive the itinerary you will have two weeks to either:

- Send us a completed ASA Reservation Application Form together with an additional deposit of AUD \$400.00 per person. On receipt of this Reservation Application and deposit, ASA will process your booking and if approved, send you a tour confirmation. At this time your deposit of AUD \$500.00 is subject to the tour's Booking Conditions.

Or

- CANCEL your Intention to Travel in writing. ASA will refund your AUD \$100.00 per person deposit, less a \$33.00 service fee (including GST).

Participation Criteria

To participate in an ASA tour, you must be reasonably fit, in good health and able to participate in all activities without assistance from Tour Leaders or other tour members. If you require assistance, a fit and able travel companion must undertake to accompany and assist you with all tasks for the duration of the whole tour. ASA's ability to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate your specific needs, your health and safety and the health and safety of other tour members, is of paramount importance to us. For this reason the ASA Reservation Application includes a Medical Information section. As a general guideline, you must be able to accomplish each of these activities without assistance or support:-

- walk and stand unassisted for at least 2-3 hours a day in hot, humid conditions
- walk confidently on and over uneven surfaces
- climb at least 3 flights of stairs
- embark and disembark from ferries, buses and trains
- walk up and down steep slopes
- walk at a steady pace and no less than 1km every 15-20 minutes
- organise, manage and carry your own luggage

- follow and remember tour instructions
- meet punctually at designated times and places
- administer your own medication

Single Supplement

Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation in a double (or twin) room for single occupancy throughout the tour. The number of rooms available for single occupancy is extremely limited. People wishing to take this supplement are therefore advised to book well in advance.



Intention to Travel Application

TOUR NAME _____

TOUR DATES _____

Booking before the tour price is available

Some ASA tours fill almost immediately. Don't miss out! You can register your 'Intention to Travel' by completing this application and returning this to ASA with a AUD\$100.00 per person deposit. Once the tour price has been published, the itinerary and ASA Reservation Application Form will be sent to you. From the time you receive the itinerary you will have two weeks to either:

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OR

- Cancel your Intention to Travel in writing. ASA will refund your AUD\$100.00 per person deposit, less a \$33.00 service fee (including GST).

Applicant Details (as in passport)

TITLE Mr Mrs Ms Miss Dr Other _____

FIRST NAME _____ Preferred FIRST NAME _____

MIDDLE NAME _____ SURNAME _____

POSTAL ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ COUNTRY _____ POSTCODE _____

TEL. (AH) () _____ TEL. (BH) () _____ Mobile Tel: _____

EMAIL address _____

Date of birth ____ / ____ / ____ GENDER Male Female

Tour Accommodation (rooming preferences)

I/we would like: a twin-bedded room a double-bedded room a room for sole occupancy

I am travelling: on my own with a friend/family member Travel Companion _____

Meals

I do not have any specific dietary requests

Please **X** the box if you **CAN NOT** eat any of the following:

fish poultry red meat dairy products

eggs pork nuts

Other _____

Allergies: Refer to the Medical Information

Correspondence

Your preferred method of correspondence Postal Mail Email Address _____

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- walk confidently on and over uneven surfaces
- organise, manage and carry your own luggage
- climb at least 3 flights of stairs
- follow and remember tour instructions
- embark and disembark from ferries, buses and trains
- meet punctually at designated times and places
- walk up and down steep slopes
- administer your own medication.

Applicant's Signature _____

Dated _____

Tour / Course Name

Name of Traveller 1

Name of Traveller 2

I have enclosed a payment to the value of \$

 (including CC or bank fee if applicable) for this tour

Payment by (please indicate): Cheque Direct Debit (see below) Credit Card (see below)

International Payments

Welcome to our international travellers! If you are making a payment and do not have an Australian bank account/credit card, we can only accept payment as follows:

- via credit card with the applicable fee - the credit card company/bank will set the exchange rate
- via bank transfer; please give your surname and tour code (eg. Smith 21705) as a reference and ask your bank to allow for all charges.

Bank cheques or personal cheques will not be accepted.

By Cheque (accept Australian cheques only)

Please make cheques payable to *Australians Studying Abroad*

Direct Deposit or Internet Banking

You will need to:

1. Provide your bank with ASA's bank details (see below) and the amount you wish to transfer OR make a direct deposit through any ANZ branch
2. Include any fees levied by the banks
3. Provide a reference number (Mobile or last name recommended).
4. Complete section below, including confirmation no. (given when transaction completed).

Australians Studying Abroad bank details

Bank ANZ
Branch 420 St Kilda Road, Melbourne Vic
Swift Code ANZBAU3M
BSB 013-423
Account No 3472-32759

Bank confirmation No.

Reference used: Mobile or last name recommended

Date Money Transferred

Credit Card Payment

Credit card fees apply: Mastercard, Visa & American Express 2%

Please debit my: Mastercard Visa American Express

I authorise ASA to debit my credit card for the amount due plus the applicable fee as above

Credit Card Number

Expiry Date

Security Code (CVC)

Bank the Card is linked to (eg. NAB or ANZ)

Cardholders Name

Cardholders Billing Address

Postcode

State

Country

Phone

Email

Cardholders Signature
