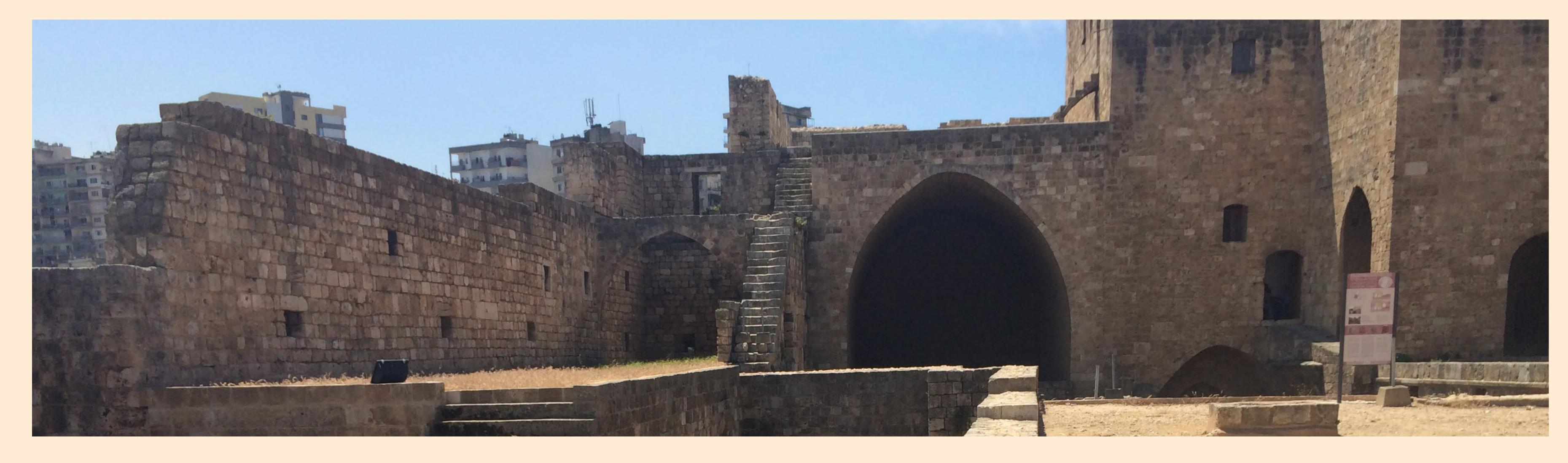


TRIPOLI







Tripoli (Trablous)

The northern city of Tripoli has a rich history since its foundation. It is 85 kilometers north of Beirut. It has the best-preserved monuments from the Middle Ages. It is one of the ancient coast settlements in Lebanon that was continuously inhabited at least since the Phoenician period. Its strategic location on the Mediterranean coast links the sea to the interior of natural Syria, especially to the area of the Syrian City of Homs. Tripoli's architectural remains attest to its long history, which witnessed interrupted surges in its importance in relation to the empires that dominated the coast.

In the wake of the Arab Muslim conquest in 635, the city became one of the main naval town during the Umayyad period. It is said that

it gained importance in the early Umayyad period because of its proximity to the island of Cyprus, which was attacked by the Umayyads. In the Fatimid era, more precisely in the middle of the 11th century, it will acquire a kind of independence under the Banu Amar. It developped a reputation of a prosperous city and a city of letters, namely the creation of the "Dar al-Ilm" (home of knowledge). Under the Crusaders, Tripoli was the capital of a county which bore its name. It continued so until 1289 when the city was conquered by the Mamluks. Under the Mamluks, the city prospered again and several buildings were constructed, including mosques, madrasas (schools), khans and public baths. Tripoli has played an important role in the

economyduring the Crusaders and Mamluksera. It was equipped with a coin minting workshop, of a big importance during the Crusaders era and that will continue its production under the reign of different Mamluk Sultans. These pieces were legally used in all Syria under the Mamluks. Its role as a launching pad for campaigns in the Mediterranean subdued, but the city remained an important "thaghr," a defense port city up until the period of the independence of Lebanon in the mid-twentieth century. During the Mamluk, Ottoman and the French Mandate periods the city gained economic importance and witnessed construction activities.



The city is divided into two major sections, "al-Mina" and "al-Madina". The latter is the medieval city that stretches along Abou Ali River, which springs from the mountains where the cedar forest is. Al-Mina is the city part related to the settlement on the sea, which has been inhabited since the Phoenicians.

Most of the buildings in the old section of Tripoli attest to Mamluk, Ottoman and French Mandate architectural styles. Numerous religious and civic buildings survived, including mosques, khans (commercial lodging facility), hammams (public baths), souks (markets), residential buildings and madrasas (schools), as Qartawiyya, al-Nouriyya, al-Nasiriyya, al-Khayriyya Hassan, al-Qadiriyya, al-Burtasiya, al-Sagragiyah, al-Khatouniyya...

Some of the mosques are still used by the citizens of Tripoli. Among them are al-Mansuri, Taynal, Abd al-Wahed al-Makansi, al-'Attar, al-Tawbah, and Arghun Shah. The Mamluk sultan al-Mansur Qalawun ordered the construction of al-Mansuri Mosque in year 1294, after he conquered the city which was a crusader stronghold at the time. The mosque, the oldest one in the city, was built over a period of two decades, and was cared for its good states in later times. It bears typical Mamluk style traits including the ablaq (alternating colors in the courses of stones), and the mugarnas formations (stalactite like structures). In addition, in Tripoli there is the largest Crusaders fortress in Lebanon, the Citadel of Raymond de Saint-Gilles.

The Taynal Mosque was built by the Mamluk governor of Tripoli Saif al-Din Taynal in 1336 on the site of a 12th Carmelite Crusader Church. It is one of the best-preserved Mamluk buildings. Some architectural features from the earlier church are still visible in the mosque, including partially preserved nave. The mosque

includes some of the best-colored marble inlay decoration in Mamluk architecture, in addition to ablaq patters and the mugarnas semi-domes above its mihrab and entrance. The alternating courses of stone are in black and buff colors. The color scheme is the same as the one used in the city of Aleppo, unlike the red and buff color scheme that was used in Cairo. This is due to the proximity of Tripoli to North Syrian cities. The mosque also features pointed arches, a typical structural system in Mamluk architecture. The stonework in the walls of the mosque shows two styles of constructions: the Crusader and the Mamluk ones.

Mamluk army generals who served in Tripoli also built several foundations including madrasas (religious school) such as the exquisite Burtasiyya madrasa (1310), and al-Qartawiyya madrasa (1316-1326). Mosques were also constructed, these include Abd al-Wahed Mosque (1305-06), al-'Attar Mosque (1330), which has the tallest minaret from the mamluk period as well as a finely carved mugarnas vault in its entrance; the mosque of Arghun Shah (14th century), and al-Mu'allaq Mosque (16th century).

The port of Tripoli remained active in the Mamluk and the Ottoman periods, and the city constituted a link between the Mediterranean and the interior, therefore many khans were constructed. Of the surviving khans there are: Khan al-Askar (end 13th century), Khan al-Khaiyatine (14th century), Khan al-Saboun (15th century), and Souk al Haraj.

Hammams (public baths) also survived, such as Hammam al-Nouri (1333), Hammam Izz al-Din, and Hammam al-Jadid (1730).

It is also important to keep in mind that the crusader citadel survived in a way. Built between 1103 and 1104 by the Crusader Raymond de Saint-Gilles, the Citadel of Saint-Gilles is the

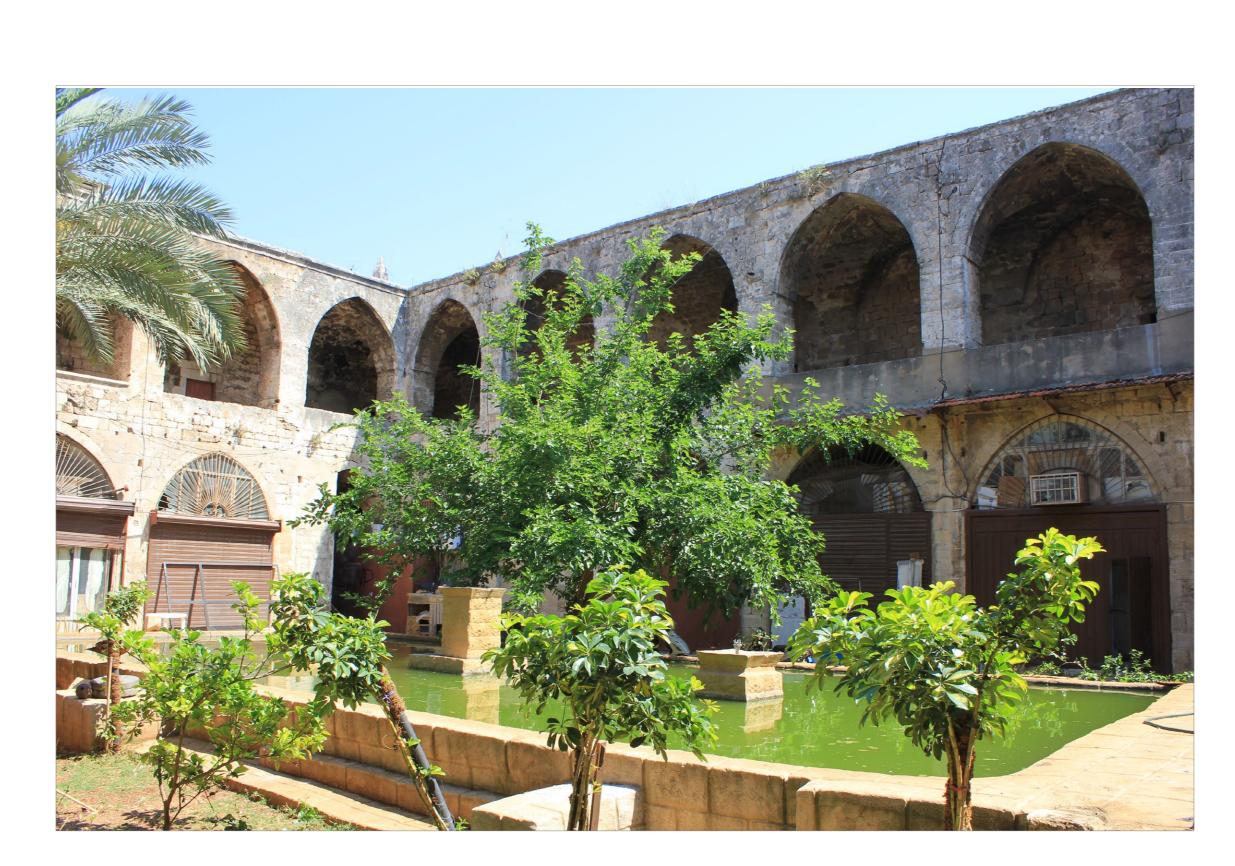
biggest in Lebanon. It was burned down during the mamluk conquest of the city in 1297, and consequently it was partly rebuilt the following century by the Mamluks. Its towers over the city and its most impressive element is the imposing entrance with its moat and three gateways. Most of the interior spaces were rearranged by the Mamluks. Later, it was restored by the Ottoman Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent in

1521. The modern city is a typical modern Mediterranean city with concrete residential buildings, two ways streets. Its harbor is used for commercial export-import activities, whereas it retains small fishing harbors. This area is called al-Mina (literally the harbor), where there are many restaurants and pubs. However, the old city preserves its medieval aura. The souks, together with the khans, form an agglomeration of various trades where tailors, jewelers, perfumers, tanners, woodworkers, and soap makers.

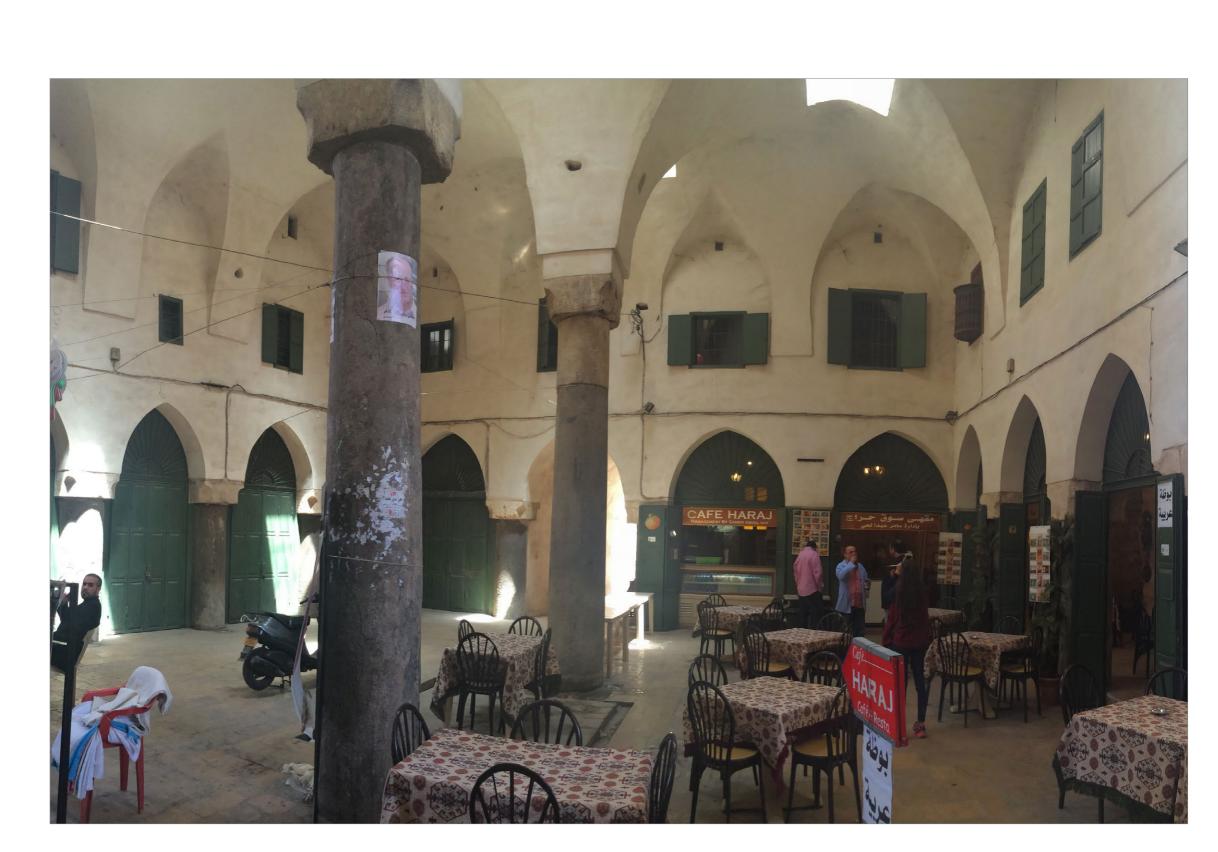
Corniche El-Minais a long side walk by the seaside where one can enjoy a drink, a shisha and a nice walk. From there, one can walk around in the old city of El Mina. The Palm Islands is a UNESCO protected site. It is a strand of small islands off Tripoli's coast. They are a haven for endangered loggerhead turtles and an important bird area. To get to the Islands, one can hire a small boat from the Corniche. From there, one can enjoy bird watching, hiking, guided interpretive tours; snorkeling, swimming, diving and photography. Tripoli is often described as "al-fayha'," meaning "the fragrant one" due to the orange groves that once surrounded it. Unfortunately, with the urban expansion of the city, these are ever diminishing. Nevertheless, the city is only a drive away from many natural attractions.



Al Mansouri Great Mosque: completed in 715 A.H. (1314-15 A.D.) by Al-Ashraf Khalil and Al-Naser Muhammad, during Mamluke period. The mosque is located in the Nuriyyah district. It is the first monument built in Mamluke Tripoli, and remains the largest and the best known of the city's mosques. The door and the minaret probably belong to an earlier Christian structure, and were repurposed.



Khan El Saboun: built in the second half of the 16th century or beginning of the 17th, during the Ottoman period by Ottoman governor Youssef Al-Saifi. The khan is located close to the Souk al Sayyagheen and entered from within. It was originally for European merchants and now functions as a place for traditional soap shops.



Souk el Haraj: is considered as one of the oldest and most important commercial bazaars in Tripoli. This covered Mamluke (14th century) bazaar has a high vaulted ceiling supported by granite columns which may have originally been part of the Roman or Byzantine structures that were renovated by the Crusaders, Mamlukes and ottomans.

Partners and Associates















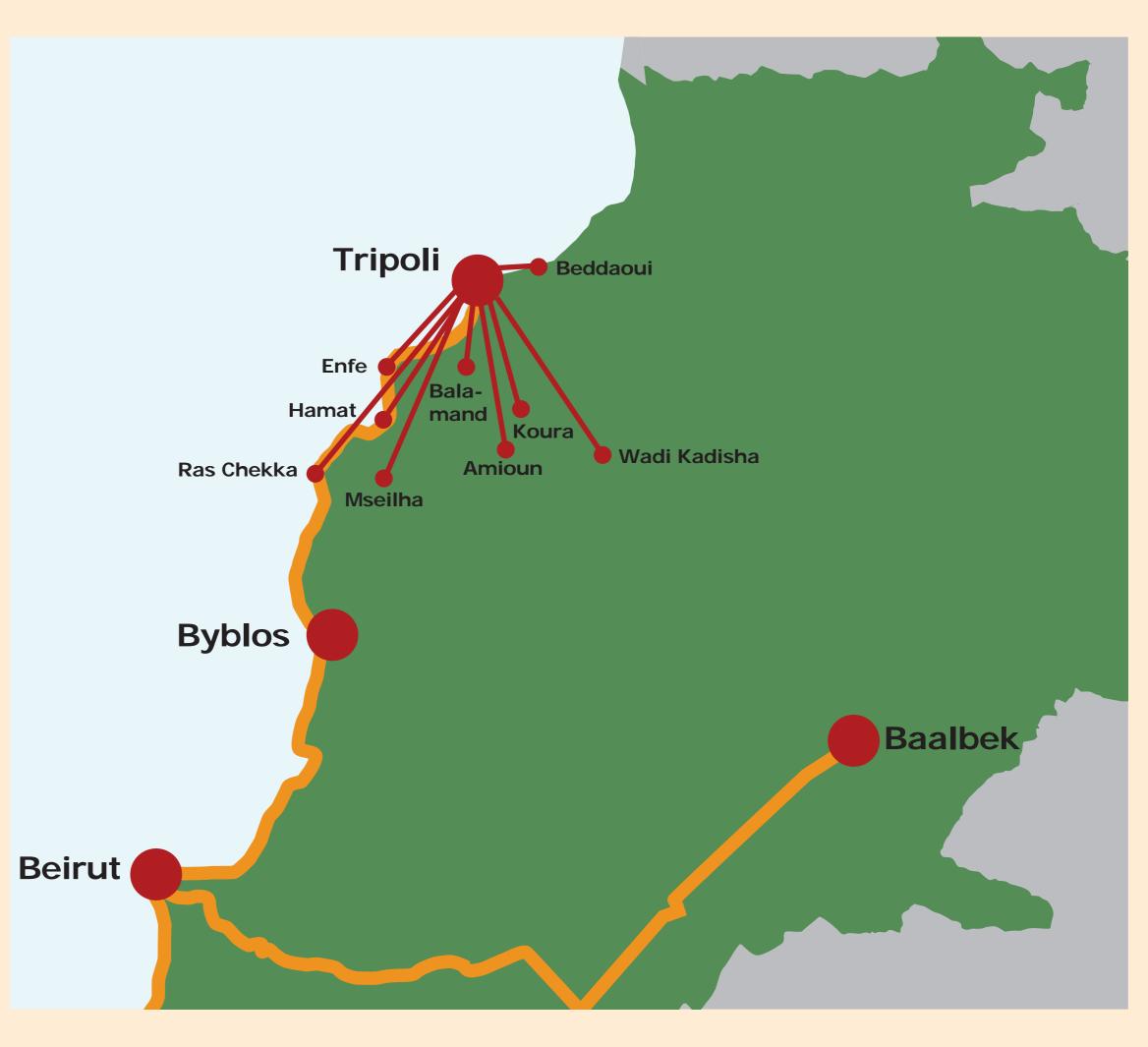
TRIPOLI

Surroundings











The town of **Beddaoui** is about 4 km from Tripoli. A small archaic workshop, where the art of glassblowing has been uninterrupted since Phoenician times, is open for visits. Today, there are very few craftsmen that still practice this art. Glasses, vases, candleholders, bowls and ashtrays dispense a wide array of colors ranging

from violet to turquoise, green and yellow. Balamand is about 15 km from Tripoli. Balamand was formerly a monastery founded by Cistercian monks in 1157 and was known variously as Belmont, Bellimonte Ultra Mare, and Bellus-Mons. In the 17th century, the monastery came under the authority of the local Orthodox Church. It is situated on a hilltop overlooking the Mediterranean Sea to the west. To its east lie the renowned Koura Olive Groves. You can visit the monastery as well as the famous campus of the Balamand University.

Anfe or Enfe peninsula is about 15 km from Tripoli. The ancient city was built along a rocky promontory since the Bronze Age. In the first centuries of Islam, this village had no important role. It will again gain importance under the Crusaders. The Crusader castle of Nephin (Enfe) of which only the foundations remain, is located on a rocky plateau right on the shore. It was also the residence of the Counts of Tripoli. There are a few other sites worth visiting: the byzantine church of Saydet al-Rih (Our Lady of the Wind), the Monastery of the Watchman (Deir el Natour) dating from the Crusaders period, and the Romanesque church of St. Catherine. One can also simply wander around the fishing docks, visit the remains of the Sea Fortress, and walk along the length of the bay where the salt marshes add a typically pretty note to the landscape. This city is known for the manufacture of salt.

Amioun is located around 12 kilometers south eastfrom Enfe. The most outstanding monument in Amioun is undoubtedly the cliff called "al-Sheer" overlooking the main road; this cliff is scattered with cavities that are actually tombs from the Roman period. These cavities were probably reused in the medieval era. The cliff is dominated by a church built in the 19th century dedicated to Saint John. The Cathedral of Mar Gerios el-Dahliz (Saint Georges the Crypt) is a monument to visit as it is a Roman temple converted into a church, its apse dates from the time of the Crusaders, the remaining structures date back to the Ottoman times. The church of St. Phocas is also to see, it dates from the time of the Crusaders, you can still see the medieval frescoes on the walls.

Wadi Kadisha and Wadi Qannubin is a valley about 18 km from Tripoli. Follow Abou Ali River into the mountains to discover the sacred source of Qadisha, "Holy" in Aramaic, and its valley,

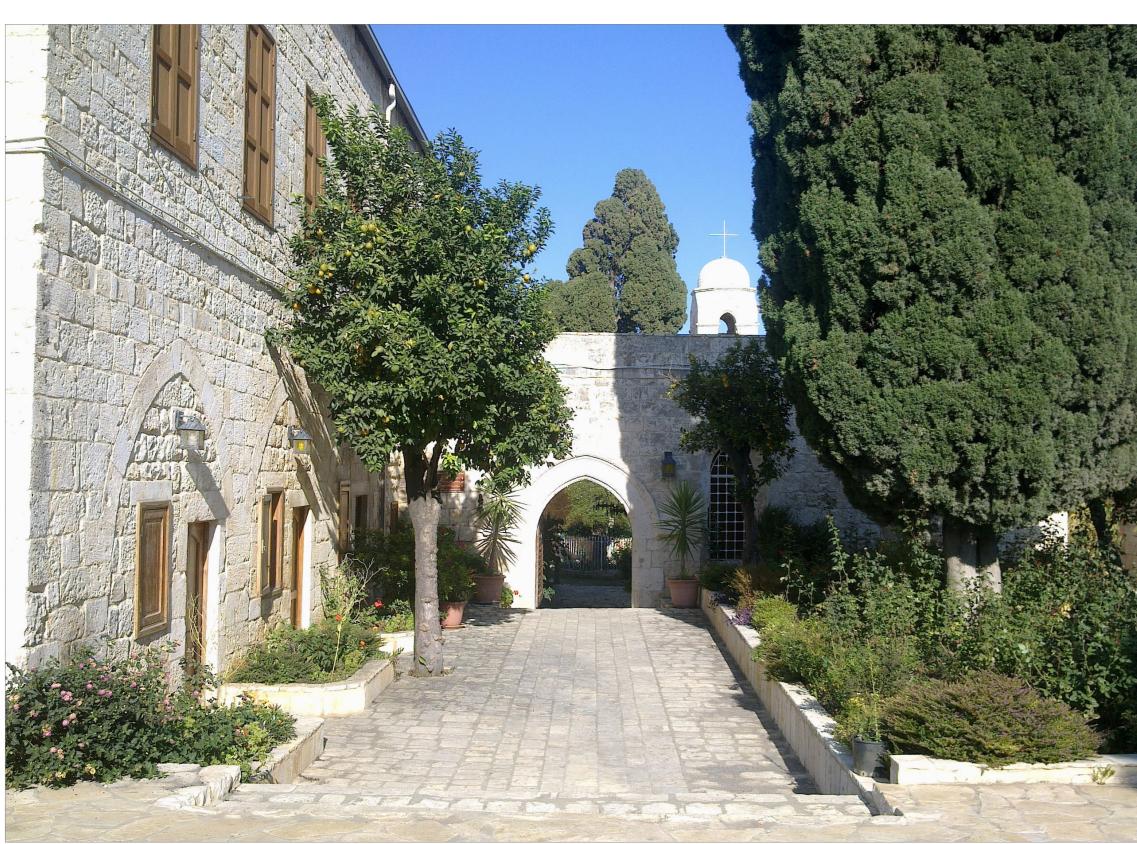
sometimes called the Holy Valley. One can visit monasteries such as St. Anthony of Qozhaya, the Qannubin Monastery, Our Lady of Hawka and Mar Sarkis, all carved into the sides of the rocky hills of an abyssal valley that has provided a safe haven for Christians since the 4th century.

Mseilha or Mussaylha in Hamat is about 20 km south from Tripoli. Just a couple of meters after the Chekka tunnel stands a castle on a rock, highlighted with bright lights at night, and almost invisible during the day, as it blends against the mountain.

Deir Saydet al Nouriyye in Ras Chekka is about 5 km north from Mseilha. This popular pilgrimage site is situated on the edge of the 200-meter high cliff of Ras Chekka. The original monastery dates back to the 6th century and is located below, on the side of the cliff. People believe that a long time ago, two sailors found themselves in peril. They began to pray. The Virgin appeared to them as a light and guided them gently to the shore. The grateful sailors carved a cave in the cliff dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and called the shrine "Our Lady of the Light". A bit further, there is another church and monastery, dedicated to St. Simon. The view from there is endless.



Qannoubine

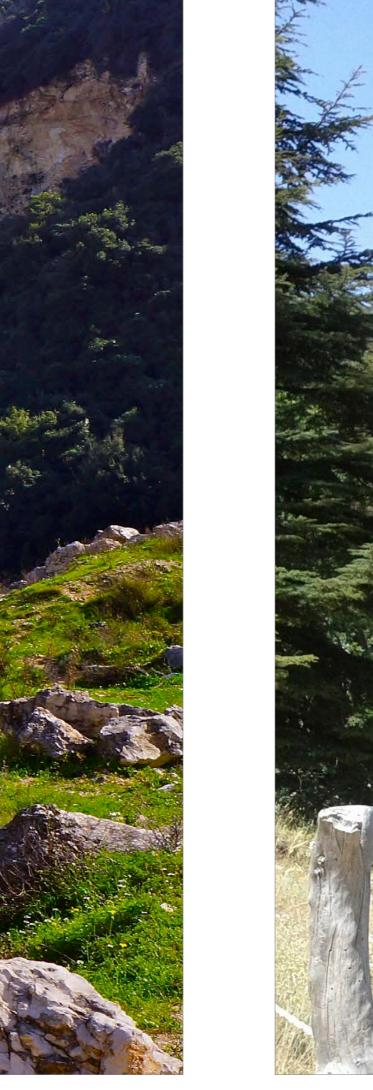


Balamand

Mseilha

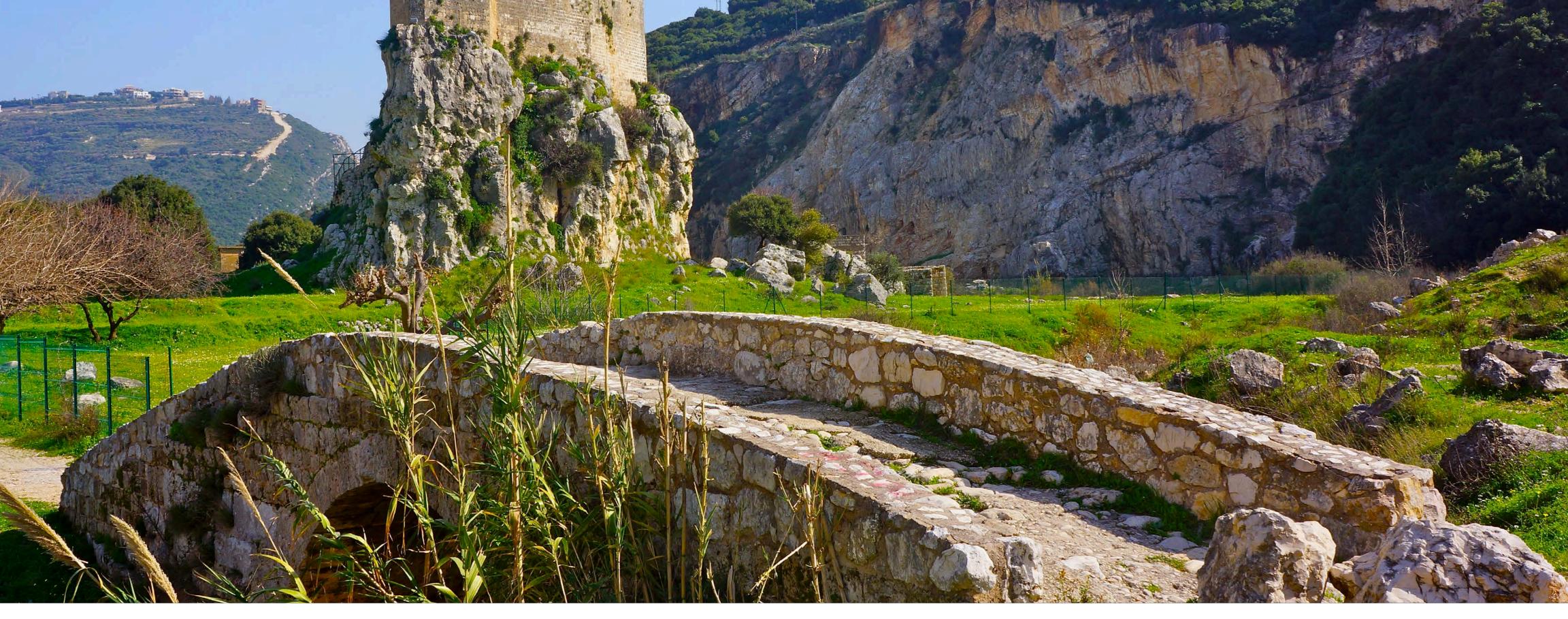


Wadi Kadisha





The Cedars

















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