



KORYO TOURS

Travel Syria's Historic Lands

**Christmas in Syria: Beirut to Damascus, Aleppo,
Palmyra, Al Mishtaya, Hama, Bosra, and more!**

6 nights in Syria + 2 nights in Beirut (4 & 5 hotels)*





INTRODUCTION

Join our 8-day Syria tour, celebrating **Christmas** in the heart of Damascus!

From the lively streets of Damascus to the Roman ruins of Bosra, the mountain monastery of Mar Musa, and the majestic Citadel of Aleppo, this Syria group tour promises to be one of our most fun for 2026.

A rare chance to see the country at a time of renewal and resilience.

Our journey begins in **Damascus**, one of the world's oldest cities. Wander along Straight Street, visit the **Umayyad Mosque** and **Ananias Church**, explore vibrant souks, and share tea with locals at Al Nofara Café, home to the city's traditional storyteller.

Continue south to **Bosra**, where the world's best-preserved Roman theatre stands almost untouched

Travel north through breathtaking landscapes to **Mar Musa Monastery, Homs**, and **Aleppo**.

Explore Aleppo's ancient **citadel**, bustling markets, and famous soap factories before watching the sunset from a secret viewpoint. Visit the medieval fortress of **Krak des Chevaliers**, sample local wines in the Homs countryside, and spend a night in the picturesque **Christian village of Al Mishtaya**.

We end our Syria tour at the magnificent ruins of **Palmyra**, once a vital Silk Road city and home to Queen Zenobia.

Explore its great colonnades and temples before returning to Damascus, completing a journey that reveals Syria's incredible history, culture, and enduring spirit.



HIGHLIGHTS

- **Christmas in Syria!** | Enjoy the celebrations with the locals!
- **Palmyra** | The ancient city and Roman Ruins.
- **Al Mishtaya & Homs Countryside** | Explore the beautiful Syrian countryside including a wine and cheese tasting session at a local winery!
- **Damascus & Aleppo** | The Old Town of Damascus, the Umayyad Mosque, the bustling Souk al-Hamidiye, the exquisite Azem Palace... and explore Syria's second largest city of Aleppo, including the famous citadel.

INCLUSIONS

- Return transportation from Beirut to Damascus.
- 2 nights hotel in Beirut before & after the tour in Syria.
- All transportation within Syria (AC bus).
- Entrance fees for all sites mentioned in the itinerary.
- Accommodation every night (4 & 5* hotels, 1x 3* hotel).
- Local tour guide
- Koryo Tours tour leader
- All meals listed (including homemade dinner with a Syrian family + private Arada Show)
- One 1.5-L bottle of water per day.
- Permits and all local taxes
- Syrian land border departure tax

EXCLUSIONS

- Travel to Beirut.
- Visa fee.
- Personal expenses such as souvenirs or any optional activities.
- Extra drinks/snacks at meal times.
- Tipping for the guide and driver

NOTES

- All items on this itinerary are subject to change or cancellation depending on the security situation and availability. Koryo Tours takes safety on our tours extremely seriously and it will be prioritised above all else.
- Visa will be visa on arrival at the border. Prices range depending on nationality from around 80 USD - 200 USD.



ITINERARY

DAY 1 | December 22 | Tuesday

Briefing Night in Beirut

Arrival in Beirut

- Arrive at Beirut-Rafic Hariri International Airport (BEY) throughout the day. Beirut is served by major European, Middle Eastern carriers, and the local airline MEA-Middle East Airlines from various destinations, well-connected with the rest of the world.

Welcome Dinner

- Welcome Dinner & Pre-Tour Briefing
- We will gather for some excellent Lebanese food and a pre-tour briefing tonight before the adventure ahead.

Accommodation | Crowne Plaza Hotel, 5* hotel located in Central Hamra, Beirut

Included Meals | N/A



DAY 2 | December 23 | Wednesday

Into Syria

Beirut to Damascus Scenic Drive

- We will leave early from the Lebanese capital on a scenic drive to the Syrian border, and onward to Damascus. This is a ca. 4-hour-long drive, including formalities at the Lebanon-Syria border.
- Check in and a short recharge at our hotel in Damascus.

The Historic Old Town of Damascus

- **Ananias Church** | The oldest underground structure of Damascus and the presumed remains of Ananias of Damascus' home, where Saul was baptised, who is known today as Paul the Apostle.
- **Straight Street** | Also known by its Latin name, Via Recta, is the Roman street that runs from East to West in Damascus' Old Town. The street has several sites dating back to the Roman, Christian, and Islamic periods, and according to the Book of Acts, St. Paul also visited here.
- **Al Nofara** | The oldest café in Damascus, where we will listen to the famous storyteller.
- Dinner will be at Naerj, the best restaurant in Damascus Old Town, where you are guaranteed to have one of the best meals of your life.
- Optional evening scrub at a historic Hamam.

Accommodation | Mamluka Hotel 5* or similar, Damascus.

Included Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



DAY 3 | December 24 | Thursday

Damascus City Tour, Busra, Christmas in Syria

Day in Damascus

- **National Museum** | Here, we will gain an overview of the civilisations that have thrived on Syrian soil. It exhibits statues, seals, jewellery, masks, mosaics, tablets, and weavings from the most important sites in the country.
- **Souk Al-Hamidiye** | The most beautiful souk of Damascus. Its shops display a wide range of goods, including clothes, fabrics, pastries, and handicrafts.
- **Umayyad Mosque** | A historic site of worship, dating back to the first millennium BCE, it was once a church and is now one of the most important mosques in the World.

Busra

- In the afternoon, we head south through the lush, fertile plains to the ancient city of Bosra al-Sham (also Busra / Busra al-sham). Busra is certainly home to the best-preserved Roman amphitheatre in the world.
- We'll explore the city's rich Roman heritage, including its baths and captivating historical tales.

Drive back to Damascus

- **Christmas Eve in Damascus** | The biggest Christmas celebrations are on Christmas eve, so we'll be in Damascus the capital to take part in the festivities.

Accommodation | Mamluka Hotel 5* or similar, Damascus

Included Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



DAY 4 | December 25 | Friday

Damascus to Aleppo

Mar Musa

- Our second stop along the road will be **Mar Musa**, a breathtaking 6th-century monastery perched among rugged mountains.
- Shaped like a towering fortress, this ancient site was founded by Mar Musa al-Habashi (Saint Moses of Abyssinia), who, according to legend, was the son of an Ethiopian king.

Hama

- Our last stop before reaching Aleppo will be **Hama**, where we'll visit the iconic waterwheels that once played a crucial role in providing water to the surrounding land. These ancient structures are a symbol of the city's rich history.

Aleppo

- **Aleppo** has been a flourishing metropolis since the 3rd millennium BCE. The city has been fighting with Damascus for the title of *the world's oldest continuously inhabited city*.
- After some exploring of the city, we'll enjoy dinner at **Qurtuba**, a renowned Syrian restaurant run by an Armenian family, known for its authentic flavours and warm atmosphere.

Accommodation | Rigga Hotel 4* or similar, Aleppo

Included Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



DAY 5 | December 26 | Saturday

Aleppo

- **Aleppo Castle** | Located in the middle of the city, the castle dominates Aleppo from a height of fifty meters. Its admirably designed towers, along with its iron gates, are distinguished by their entrances made with perfection to prevent any enemy intrusion.
- **Aleppo Market** | Stretching from the front of the castle to the old city, we'll witness the contrast between the destroyed areas, the active restoration sites, and the fully renovated section, which now looks stunning.
- **Abu Hagoub Restaurant** | As Aleppo is renowned for its spicy sausage, we will have lunch at this famous restaurant to sample the best sausage sandwiches in the city.
- **Umayyad Mosque** | The largest and one of the oldest mosques in the city, which is currently in the final stages of restoration.
- **Al-Jubaili Soap Factory** | The oldest soap factory in Aleppo, where you'll have the opportunity to witness the traditional process of crafting the world-famous laurel Aleppo soap, renowned for its quality and history. We will also visit a soap exhibition where you can touch the largest bar of soap in the world, according to the Guinness World Records Book.
- For sunset, we will visit one of our secret spots overlooking Aleppo.

Accommodation | Rigga Hotel 4* or similar, Aleppo

Included Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



DAY 6 | December 27 | Sunday

Aleppo - Idlib - Hama - Krak Des Chavaliers - Homs Countryside

Idlib

- **Idlib Governorate** | Here, we can observe a unique economic system distinct from other regions, and we will also visit the refugee camps, gaining insight into the challenges faced by displaced families.

Hama

- Drive south to Hama. Here, we'll visit the iconic waterwheels that once played a crucial role in providing water to the surrounding land.

Krak des Chevaliers

- **Krak des Chevaliers** | After that, we'll continue our journey to Krak des Chevaliers, which is described by Lawrence of Arabia as "the most wholly admirable castle in the world."
- In addition, this medieval crusader fortress is one of the most significant and well-preserved castles from that era, offering a fascinating glimpse into Syrian History.

Jarjour winery

- **Jarjour Winery** | We'll drive through the picturesque rural villages of the Homs Valley, heading to the renowned **Jarjour winery**, which is famous for its unique blue wine.
- Here, we'll enjoy a **wine and cheese tasting**, immersing ourselves in the flavours of the region.

Almishtaya

- Afterwards, we take a short drive to the Christian village of **Almishtaya**, known for its vibrant nightlife. Indeed, you can experience the lively atmosphere and enjoy the evening in one of Syria's most charming villages.

Overnight in Homs Countryside

- Finally, we have an overnight stay in a 4-star hotel in Al Mishtaya-Homs countryside.

Accommodation | Hotel in Homs Countryside

Included Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



DAY 7 | December 28 | Monday

Al Mishtaya - Palmyra - Damascus

- Syria's most iconic tourist destination. Notably, once a key city on the Silk Road, **Palmyra** briefly ruled its own empire in the 3rd century, stretching from Turkey to Egypt.
- However, despite being well-preserved, much of the city was sadly destroyed during the ISIS occupation in 2015.
- During our tour, we will explore what remains, including the **Arch of Triumph**, **Fakhr ad-Din al-Maani Castle**, the **Sulphur Spring**, the **Great Columns**, the **Theatre**, the **Agora**, and the **Tombs**.
- We'll enjoy a delicious lunch in a traditional Bedouin tent restaurant, run by a local family. This is, indeed, a perfect opportunity to savour authentic Syrian cuisine while experiencing the warm hospitality of the region.

Return to Damascus

- We will drive back to Damascus, arriving just in time to enjoy a relaxing dinner in the city.

Accommodation | Traditional Hotel in Damascus Old Town

Included Meals | Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



DAY 8 | December 29 | Tuesday

Return to Beirut

- In the morning, we will cover the remaining attractions in Damascus that might have been left out during the busy previous days.
- We will also have some time for some last-minute shopping.
- Drive back to Beirut. The estimated arrival time in Beirut is 18:00.

Accommodation | Crowne Plaza Hotel, 5* hotel located in Central Hamra, Beirut

Included Meals | Breakfast, Lunch



DAY 9 | December 30 | Wednesday

Departure Day

- Departure from **Beirut-Rafic Hariri International Airport** (BEY) throughout the day to European or Middle Eastern destinations offering connections to the rest of the World.

Included Meals | Breakfast