

**LIBYA
ROMAN & GREEK CITIES
9 DAY TOUR OF LIBYA
WITH ROMAN HOLIDAYS
May 2011**



Day 1 Tripoli

Arrive Tripoli Airport. Meet your local guide and transfer to city hotel for 3 nights. Short walking tour in modern Tripoli prior to dinner inc. September 1 Street, Algeria Square and Green Square.

Centre: Tripoli for 3 nights

Day 2 Tripoli

A full day sightseeing in Libya's capital city, known as the "White Bride of the Mediterranean". In the morning, see the famous Green Square and visit the wonderful National (Jamahiriya) Museum, housed in the Red Castle (Al-Saraya al-Hamra), which includes one of the finest collections of statuary and mosaics in the world.

The walled old town of Tripoli encloses, arguably, the most charming medina in all of North Africa. After lunch in an old town restaurant, explore the warren of streets and alleyways, including the bustling Souks, each devoted to a different trade, the historic house of the 18th century governor Karamanli, the Karamanli Mosque, the 16th century Dragut Mosque, burial place of the famous pirate of that name, the 19th century Gorgi Mosque, the 18th century former British Consulate, the former Turkish Prison, now an infant school, St. George's Orthodox Church, the 19th century

Ottoman clock tower and the sole surviving building of Roman Oea, the 2nd century Arch of Marcus Aurelius.

Day 3 Sabrata – Janzour - Tripoli

Head west from Tripoli along the coastal road the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Sabrata, originally founded in the 4th century BC. It later fell under Greek influence before Rome took hold in the 1st century AD. The most spectacular monument is the Theatre, featuring 108 Corinthian columns rising to a height of twenty metres above the stage. Below the stage you will see marble friezes depicting mythological figures including the Three Graces, the Judgement of Paris and the Nine Muses.

Other sites include the Punic Mausoleum of Bes, the Temple of Antoninus, the Temple of Zeus, the Court of Justice and the great Roman Forum. The Roman Museum houses exquisite mosaics including complete wall and floor panels.

Enroute back to Tripoli, we shall also visit the Janzour Museum with its tomb frescoes.

Day 4 Tripoli – Benghazi –Ptolemais – Al-Bayda

A morning flight takes you from Tripoli to Libya's second city, Benghazi from where you drive to the Greco-Roman city of Ptolemais. In Ptolemais you will visit the Villa of the Four Seasons, the Odeon Theatre, Agora (market area), the Colonnaded Palace and the great underground Cisterns, once the largest in North Africa. There is also a small museum which houses the Four Seasons mosaic taken from the villa on the main site and a number of statues and tablets. The route continues through the Jabal Akhdar (Green Mountains) to Al-Bayda where you will stay for 3 nights.

Centre: Al-Bayda for 3 nights.

Day 5 Cyrene – Al-Bayda

Full day excursion to the magnificent Greek city of Cyrene, founded in the 6th century BC by immigrants from the Greek island of Thera. The city reached its zenith in the 4th century BC, was ruled by the Ptolemies from the 3rd century BC and fell under Roman rule in the 1st century AD. Two major earthquakes in the 3rd and 4th centuries AD sealed its fate.

Amongst the sites visited in Cyrene are the colossal Temple of Zeus, larger than the Parthenon in Athens, the hillside Necropolis containing over 2000 tombs, the Forum, the monumental passageway of Hermes and Hercules, House of the High Priest Jason Magnus, the House of the Christian Hesychius, the Agora (with its Tomb of Battus, Sanctuary of Demeter and Kore and Naval Monument), the Sanctuary of Apollo containing the Temple of Apollo and the Roman Baths, and the Amphitheatre. There is also a small but excellent Museum.



Day 6 Apollonia – Ras al-Hilal – Al-Atrun – Al-Bayda

The morning is devoted to ancient Apollonia, which remained the port of Cyrene for a thousand years. Here you will see the several Byzantine churches, the Roman baths, the Palace and arguably the most enchanting Greek theatre in the world, set in a picturesque cove. Afterwards, drive along the coastal road of the Green Mountains to enjoy the vista and a picnic lunch (dependent on weather) before visiting the Byzantine churches at Ras al-Hilal and Al-Atrun.

Day 7 Slontah - Qasr Libya – Benghazi - Tripoli

From Cyrene, travel back through the Green Mountains to Slontah, site of a tiny, eerie pre-Islamic grotto with grotesque carvings; its use is in doubt but it may have been a funerary site.

Continue to Qasr Libya with its Byzantine church and museum housing one of the finest collections of mosaics in the country: 50 panels depicting river gods, nymphs and wildlife as well as a very rare depiction of the Pharos Lighthouse, one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

Continue to Benghazi for the flight back to Tripoli.

Centre: Tripoli for 2 nights.

Day 8 Leptis Magna - Tripoli

Full day excursion to Leptis Magna, the largest and best-preserved Roman city in the world that came to prominence in the 2nd century AD under its native son, the Emperor Septimus Severus. Following his reign, the city fell into decline until revived by the Emperor Justinian in the 5th century AD at which time it fell under Byzantine rule.



The vast site is truly spectacular, and includes the triumphal Arch of Septimius Severus, the Hadrianic Baths complex, the Palaestra (Athletics Ground), the Nymphaeum (Temple of Nymphs), the huge Imperial Forum, the Basilica, the Arches of Tiberius and Trajan, the Theatre with its beautiful backdrop against the Mediterranean Sea, the Sanctuary of the Divine Emperors, and the Market with its unique kiosks which, at the time of construction, were a groundbreaking design in the Roman world. In the eastern part of the city lie the Circus and the vast Amphitheatre, the most complete in the world, with seating for over 15,000 spectators. You will visit the vast arena, the terraces, gladiators' anterooms and animal enclosures.

En route back to Tripoli, if open a visit will be made to the 2nd century Villa Sileen, discovered in 1974. The wall paintings portray scenes such as gladiatorial combat and chariot racing while the mosaics display river scenes that include sea nymphs, birds and animals.

NB: Villa Sileen is currently closed for renovation with no re-opening date scheduled. However, we are often able to gain entry.

Day 9 Tripoli – Tripoli Airport

At leisure prior to transfer to airport.

Accommodation:

TRIPOLI: Dar Arkno boutique hotel (Special category)

AL-BAYDA: Gulf Pearl (Standard Tourist) or Marhaba Hotel (Superior Tourist):

Included in tour cost:

- Airport/hotel/airport transfers.
- Return flights London to Tripoli – Benghazi - Tripoli- London
- Air conditioned 30 seat bus.
- Local English-speaking guide throughout and Dr Paul Wilkinson.
- Accommodation on a twin/double share basis (unless single room booked and paid for).
- Meal plan as required.
- Sightseeing and entrance fees (including amateur camera fees when included in ticket).
- Visa invitation.
- Confirmation of return flights.
- Tourist registration.
- Travel permits.

- Not included in tour cost:
- Visa acquisition costs (see above)
- Travel insurance.
- Personal items such as telephone calls, extra drinks, laundry and room service, tips.
- All items not specifically mentioned as included.

HOTEL RATINGS

Hotel star ratings in Libya are indigenous to the country and may not be comparable to those in other countries (except for 5* international hotels). Star ratings are often given by the hotels themselves and there may be differences in quality and services from city to city between hotels given the same rating. We therefore grade hotels as Standard Tourist, Superior Tourist or 5*. All hotels have air conditioning, ensuite facilities and satellite television.

CLOSURES

The National Museum in Tripoli is closed on Friday. All other museums are closed on Monday. Shops and some sites in Tripoli Old Town are closed on Friday and some sites are closed on Saturday. Villa Sileen near Leptis Magna is closed until further notice, but we may gain entrance.

VISAS

For most nationalities, we will arrange the visa at a cost of £30 per person. Passports must be valid for at least six months from departure date from Libya.

IMPORTANT

There must be no evidence in passports of a visit to Israel or the Occupied Territories, including exit or entry stamps indicating the Jordanian and Egyptian border crossings with Israel. **A translation into Arabic of the holder's personal details must be**

imprinted in the passport. In addition, there must be at least one blank page available for the visa and tourist registration stamps. Please contact us for further details.

BOOKING

A 30% deposit is payable in order to book this tour: the tour costs £1984 per person and a £205 single supplement. Please send deposit cheque by November 2010 (Roman Holidays) to KAFS. School Farm Oast, Graveney Road, Faversham, Kent. ME13 8UP.