



Egypt and Libya
Historical and Contemporary
16 - 27 March 2010



Jon Baines
tours



The bustling port of Alexandria

Travel along some of the Mediterranean's greatest sites on a North African tour from Alexandria to Leptis Magna. Start in legendary Alexandria and continue to El Alamein and onto Tobruk; visit the ancient Greek cities of Cyrene and Appolonia; see Byzantine Qasr Libya; stop at Ptolemais and vibrant Tripoli; and, finally, marvel at magnificent Leptis Magna.

Arrive in Cairo late in the evening to spend the night. Next morning, board a train to the fabled city of Alexandria, which is once again taking its rightful place as a cultural centre. It is a challenge to find a more legendary city than Alexandria – founded by Alexander the Great, it was the seat of iconic queen Cleopatra, the site of the towering Pharos lighthouse, one of the seven Wonders of the World, and the location of the Great Library of Alexandria, renowned as the ultimate archive of ancient knowledge.

Dealt a harsh hand by history, no sign today remains of the ancient city. Instead, it carries the architectural legacy of a cosmopolitan renaissance in the 19th century, cut short in the 1950s by Nasser's anti-colonial, pro-Arab regime. In the 1940s some 40% of the city's population was made up of foreigners, with a lively intellectual and artistic café culture. Alexandria's cosmopolitan communities were swept out after 1952, but the elegant period cafés remain and there are signs today that a new

creative vibrancy is returning to the streets, galleries and theatres of this re-emerging city.

Hear a fascinating background talk on 'Alexander, the Ptolemies and Cleopatra', and visit the outstanding National Museum. With its extraordinary collection including items from the superb Greco-Roman Museum, the National Museum does an excellent job of tracing the city's history from antiquity to the modern period in a beautifully restored Italianate villa. Wander through the imposing catacombs of Kom ash-Shuqqafa, the largest known Roman burial site in Egypt. Finish the day with dinner in the local fish market, which is as impressive as you would expect of a city that tackles the wholesale consumption of fresh fish with due reverence.



The ambitious new library of Alexandria



Roman baths overlooking the Mediterranean at Appollonia

Take your morning coffee at Ahwa al-Hind, one of the city's authentic coffee houses, before visiting the spectacular new library, Biblioteca Alexandrina. This superb piece of modern architecture, which has room for eight million books, plants Alexandria firmly back onto the world cultural map, with a declared intention of being 'the world's window onto Egypt and Egypt's window onto the world.' Afterwards, visit the beautifully restored Fort Qaitbey, which sits on the remains of the the legendary Pharos lighthouse, and retreat to the cool gardens of Montazah Palace, perched on a rocky outcrop over the sea.

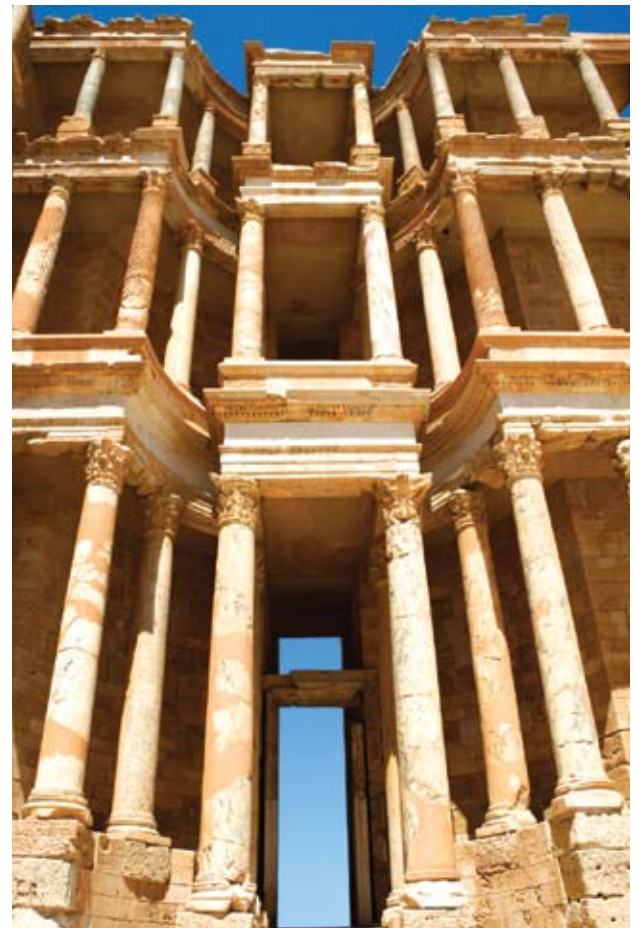
Alexandria's literary heritage is yet another facet of this absorbing city. Take a tour of Literary Alexandria during the 20s, 30s and 40s in the company of a specialist guide, following in the footsteps of writers such as Lawrence Durrell, Cavafy and E M Forster, including a visit to Villa Ambron, where Durrell lived and wrote. In the evening, join the locals in strolling along the seafront Corniche and stop for a tea and a fragrant puff of apple smoke in El-Tugareya Sheesha, an unassuming coffeeshouse, that is nevertheless an Alexandrian institution and informal centre of business and culture for 90 years.

Visit El Alamein, a small coastal outpost famed for a decisive Allied victory in the WWII North Africa campaign. More than 80,000 soldiers were killed or wounded at El Alamein and subsequent battles, as the thousands of graves in the vicinity of the town testify. Visit the haunting cemetery, the War Museum and the old lighthouse.

Next day, cross the border into Libya and drive to Tobruk, hearing a talk on 'The Siege of Tobruk' en route. Tobruk was the scene of some of the most important battles of WWII due to its strategic position. Spend the day here, visiting the various cemeteries, as well as the Australian dugout hospital and Rommel's operations bunker.

Drive to the Byzantine basilicas of Ras al-Hilal and Al-Atrun, set among dramatic scenery overlooking a perfect bay with panoramic views of the Mediterranean. Enjoy a picnic lunch in this lovely spot, before continuing to Susa, listening to a talk on 'Globalisation Roman Style' en route.

Spend a full day exploring the spectacular Greek city of Cyrene, which is Libya's most complete Greek city with a breathtaking setting overlooking the Mediterranean. Explore the sanctuary of Apollo, the baths, the immense acropolis, the agora and the Roman forum. On a nearby hill lie the ruins of the archaic Temple of Zeus, larger than the Parthenon at Athens. Have lunch in a cave restaurant and explore



The three-tiered theatre at Sobrata



the beautiful port city of Appollonia, with its wealth of Roman, Byzantine and Greek buildings, giving a wonderful sense of the great civilisations of the ancient world.

Visit Qasr Libya for one of the most superb collections of Byzantine mosaics to be found in North Africa, dating from the sixth century AD. These extraordinary mosaics are especially exciting for the rare depiction of the legendary Pharos lighthouse of Alexandria. Visit the Greco-Roman city of Ptolemais, before continuing to Benghazi to stay overnight.

Fly to Tripoli and visit the Janzour Museum in the morning, before an afternoon spent at the evocative ruins of Sabratha – which, although one of the most beautiful ruined Roman cities in the world, has been fated to sit in the shadow of its nearby cousin, Leptis Magna. Marvel at its majestic three-tiered theatre, amongst the finest in ancient Rome, with a magnificent colonnaded stage and low reliefs in pink and white marble.

Spend the next day exploring Tripoli, an attractive city that combines sophistication with strong tradition. Visits include the National Museum, historic houses, the former Turkish Prison and the old British consulate. You will also explore the charming old medina, with its warren of streets and alleyways and bustling souks, each devoted to a different trade.

Finally, visit the piece de resistance of the tour – Leptis Magna. There is no finer Roman city anywhere in the world, a wonderfully preserved testament

to the wealth, excess and extravagance of ancient Rome. Spend the day exploring its monumental buildings, indulgent baths, lavish decoration and superb examples of Roman town planning, set upon the shores of the glittering Mediterranean. In the evening, enjoy a Farewell Dinner in Tripoli.

Spend the following morning at leisure before departing for London, or joining the extension to Ghadames.



Gaddafi Gate in Tripoli old town

Itinerary 16 - 27 March 2010

B = Breakfast **L** = Lunch **D** = Dinner



Up to 2 hours walking



2-4 hours walking





More than 4 hours walking




Uneven or irregular surfaces


16 March (Tues) London - Cairo
Pm Depart on BA Flight to Cairo
Eve Arrive Cairo late evening. Transfer to airport hotel and overnight


17 March (Wed) Cairo – Alexandria **B D** 
Am Take the train to Alexandria
 Talk: RA “Alexander, the Ptolemis and Cleopatra”
Pm Transfer to the Windsor Hotel on the Corniche. Visit the National Museum and Catacombs
Eve Dinner in Fish Market


18 March (Thurs) Alexandria **B D** 
Am Coffee at Ahwa al-Hind. Visit the Biblioteca Alexandrina, Fort Qaitbey, and the Montazah Palace
Pm Literary Alexandria of the 1920s, '30s and '40s in the footsteps of Lawrence Durrell, with specialist guide
Eve Stroll along Corniche and Tugareya Sheesha


19 March (Fri) Alexandria - Mersa Matruh **B D** 
Am Drive to Mersa Matruh
Pm Visit El Alamein including cemeteries, War Museum and the old lighthouse


20 March (Sat) Mersa Matruh – Tobruk **B L D** 
Am Cross the Libyan border at Um Saad and drive to Tobruk.
 Talk: JR “The Siege of Tobruk”
 Visit the Knightsbridge and Commonwealth cemeteries, the French cemetery and the German memorial
Pm Visit the Australian dugout hospital, Rommel’s operations bunker and the remains of the “Lady Be Good” aircraft

21 March (Sun) Tobruk – Susa **B L** 
Am Finish sightseeing in Tobruk.
 Drive to Susa via the Byzantine basilicas of Ras al-Hilal and Al-Atrun, overlooking the Mediterranean
Pm Picnic lunch. Continue to Susa
 Talk: RA “Globalisation Roman Style”

22 March (Mon) Susa - Cyrene – Apollonia **B L** 
Am Full day excursion to the magnificent Greek city of Cyrene
Pm Lunch in a cave restaurant. Visit the ancient port town of Apollonia
Eve Talk (Local Speaker) “The Lion of the Desert - Omar Al-Mukhtar”

23 March (Tues) Qasr Libya - Ptolemais – Benghazi **B D** 
Am Drive to Qasr Libya and visit the Byzantine church and museum containing 50 6th century AD mosaics, including a rare depiction of the Pharos Lighthouse
Pm Visit the Greco-Roman city of Ptolemais. Continue to Benghazi
Eve Dinner in an Italian restaurant

24 March (Wed) Benghazi – Tripoli **B D** 
Am Short flight to Tripoli. Visit the Jazour Museum
Pm Visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Sabrata
Eve Dinner in the Fish Market

25 March (Thurs) Tripoli **B L** 
Am Full day of sightseeing in Tripoli, including the National Museum, lunch in a “workers’ restaurant”, the medina, souks, historic houses, old British Consulate, Turkish Prison and St George’s Church.
 Afternoon tea at the Dar Zunmeet hotel
Eve Talk: (Local Speaker) “Modern Libya”

26 March (Fri) Tripoli - Leptis Magna – Tripoli **B D** 
Am Full day excursion to Leptis Magna, the largest and best preserved Roman city in the world
Eve Farewell Dinner

27 March (Sat) Tripoli – London **B**
Am At leisure (or take Ghadames extension)
Pm Depart for London, arrive evening



A striking piece of Ghadames architecture

Extension to Ghadames

The extension takes you to one of the most intriguing corners of Libya. Jebel Nafusa is Libya's Berber heartland and is one of the few areas where Berber culture still thrives. See otherworldly desert architecture uniquely adapted to the extreme landscapes – dramatic underground houses and spectacular circular qasrs built to protect crops. Visit the beautifully preserved oasis town of Ghadames, an enchanting caravan town of labyrinths, covered passageways, intricately decorated houses and palm gardens. Watch the sun set over sand dunes, visit ancient Kabow castle and see an abandoned village overlooking spectacular mountain scenery.

Itinerary

27 March (Sat) Tripoli – Qasr al-Haj – Nalut – Ghadames **B L D**

Am Drive into the Berber heartland of the Jabal Nafusa. Visit the Berber castle at Qasr al-Haj

Pm Drive via the fortress at Nalut to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Ghadames

28 March (Sun) Ghadames **B L D**

Am Explore Ghadames' old town, including the mosques, ancient

Pm

systems, richly decorated traditional houses and museum
Visit Ras al-Ghoul, the remains of an ancient Roman fort. Watch sunset over the sand dunes of the Grand Erg Oriental

Eve

Dinner in an old town restaurant

29 March

Kabow - Tormisa – Gharyan - Tripoli **B L D**

Am

Visit ancient Kabow castle and the abandoned village of Tormisa with its stunning mountain top views.

Pm

See the Berber troglodyte house and the pottery at Gharyan. Return to Tripoli

30 March

Tripoli – London **B**

Am

At leisure

Pm

Depart for London



A traditional house in Ghadames

Tour Leader

Dr John Richardson is the Emeritus Defence Professor of Primary Care and General Practice and is now an Honorary Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for the History of Medicine at Birmingham University. He has visited 69 countries and worked in 40 of them as a doctor. He travels worldwide leading tours or being the medical escort for pilgrimages for the Royal British Legion, or taking undergraduates and Service personnel on adventurous training or expeditions, and running History of Medicine battlefield tours. John has lectured on a Mediterranean Medicine Cruise and has led cultural tours to Turkey, China and along the Silk Road. He is still working as a general practitioner.

Speaker

Educated in Berkshire, Ron Abbott took his degree in Classics at Exeter before training at Oxford to be a teacher. His first post was in Portsmouth then he moved to Boston to teach Latin, Greek and Classical Foundations for 25 years at the Grammar School and 5 years at the High School. Now retired, Ron spends his time preparing talks, travelling beyond the bounds of Europe and the Mediterranean, and producing travelogue DVDs.

Climate Care

Every time you fly, carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are released into the atmosphere. These gases are the cause of climate change. In conjunction with Climate Care we can help you offset your carbon emissions through a range of renewable energy projects benefiting communities around the world, as well as combating climate change. To calculate your carbon emissions click on the Climate Care link on our web site where you will be given the option of paying to offset your emissions if you wish.

The cost of the tour is £2,280.00 per person

No Compulsory Single Supplement
Single travellers do not have to pay a single supplement. Jon Baines Tours allows you to opt to share a twin room with a fellow tour participant. However to guarantee a single room you must pay the supplement.

The cost includes:

- Economy flights on the scheduled services of British Airways between London Heathrow and Cairo and Tripoli and London Heathrow
- Egyptian and Libyan Visas and UK airport tax
- Comprehensive briefing notes
- The services of a tour leader (Dr John Richardson)

In Egypt and Libya the cost includes:

- 11 nights' accommodation in twin or double-bedded rooms with private facilities in medium grade hotels or the best available accommodation

The single room supplement is £295.00

- Half board (Breakfast and lunch or dinner daily) including bottled water
- A full programme of visits and talks as per the itinerary
- Admission fees where applicable
- Full-time National Guides (one in Egypt and one in Libya)
- All transport in Egypt and Libya

The cost excludes:

- All personal extras such as tips, portage, laundry, inoculation fees and drinks
- All optional excursions, tours and visits
- Travel insurance

The cost of the extension is £595.00 and includes:

- 3 nights' accommodation in twin or double-bedded rooms with private facilities in a medium grade hotel

The single room supplement is £90.00

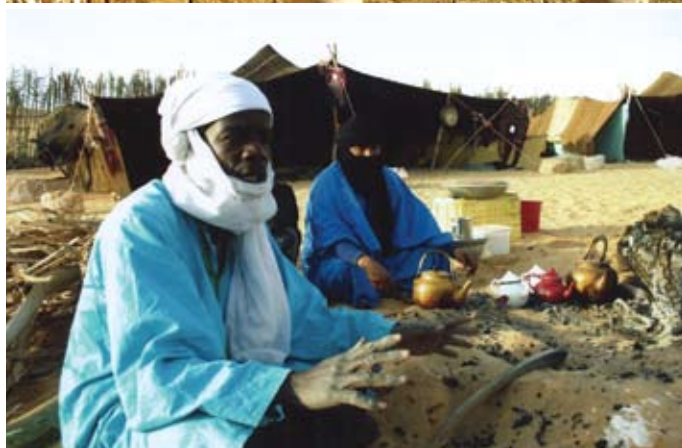
- Full board throughout the extension including bottled water
- A full programme of visits as per the itinerary
- Admission fees where applicable
- Full-time National Guide
- All transport

NB Please note all itineraries are subject to change according to local conditions. Due to the nature of the tour places are strictly limited.

About Jon Baines Tours

To travel with us is to dig below the surface, revealing the deeper destination. Of course, you will visit the great historical sites; marvel at the wonders of architecture and engineering; be moved by the riches of culture and art; and experience the most spectacular landscapes in the world. What we also do is make sure that you see the country as it is today, giving you privileged access that independent travel and other tour companies rarely get close to. We give you a variety of experiences, from the sublime to the humble, in the company of intelligent, curious, like-minded people. And while we can be worthy, we also make sure that you have a lot of fun.

Whether your journey is for study or pleasure, we make sure that you travel, understand and enjoy.



Fort Qaitbey, Alexandria (top); A Byzantine mosaic at Qasr Libya;
Close up of the basilica at Leptis Magna; Touregs near Ghadames (above)

JON BAINES TOURS LIMITED

1A Salcott Road, London, SW11 6DQ

Tel: +44 (0)207 223 9485/0207 223 5618

Fax: 0207 228 7290

Email: info@jonbainestours.co.uk

www.jonbainestours.co.uk

