



Highlights of Iraqi Kurdistan 8 days (7 nights) Escorted Group Tour



Inside the Great Mosque, Erbil, Iraqi Kurdistan



Introduction

Iraqi Kurdistan is a fascinating place of sheer beauty, warm and friendly people and a rich and challenging history. Although situated in the northern part of Iraq, it is in many ways a world apart. Largely unknown or traditionally avoided by Western tourists, we believe this region is an absolute gem in the making and that now is the time to visit before the crowds discover this hidden world.

Tour Name

Highlights of Iraqi Kurdistan – 8 days (7 nights).

Tour Description

Kurdistan Adventures is proud to present your group tour in Kurdistan - an 8 day (7 nights) fully escorted tour that allows you to travel through Iraqi Kurdistan visiting the following cities – Erbil, Lalish, Dohuk, Sulav, Amadiya, Koya, Dukan, Sulymania, Ahmad Awa and Halabja.

Please note that tours may vary slightly in terms of cities visited, price and/or other inclusions depending on the tour partner and specific departure date. Further information provided on enquiry.

Tour Grading

Easy - suitable for all travelers with an average level of fitness, good health and mobility.

Physical Rating

2 out of 5 – our tour includes some physical activity in terms of easy walking up easy gradients, getting into and out of transport and up some hotel steps.

Culture Shock Rating

Page 2 of 14

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2 out of 5 – our tour includes a range of accommodation, places visited vary from larger cities to smaller villages and communication with the outside world is generally possible through cell phone and Internet/email access where available.

Inclusions

7 nights private accommodation in the best available hotels (minimum 3-4 star), all road transport by private vehicle(s), all sightseeing as specified, entrance fees, services of a English speaking tour guide and driver, return airport transfers, all meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner as specified in the tour itinerary), bottled water, group tour information packs per client.

What is not included

Flights unless specified, visa or passport fees if applicable, travel insurance (available through us), optional activities, souvenirs, personal snacks and expenses or alcohol is not included.

Transport

Private vehicle, some walking.

Meals Included

All meals as specified in your tour itinerary.

Group Tour Price and Size

Group tour size is a minimum operating size of 6 and a maximum operating size of 16. Please contact us for latest pricing. We reserve the right to operate with less than 6 people but a small surcharge may be payable, or we postpone or cancel the tour. Tour deposit and balance payable in accordance with terms and conditions available at the Kurdistan Adventures web site.



2011/2012/2013/2014 - Group Tour Dates

~~8 October 2011 (Guaranteed)~~
~~24 March 2012 (Guaranteed)~~
~~26 May 2012 (Fully Booked)~~
~~16 June 2012 (Guaranteed)~~
~~6 October 2012 (Fully Booked)~~
30 March 2013 (Available – contact us)
13 April 2013 (Available – contact us)
27 April 2013 (Available – contact us)
11 May 2013 (Available – contact us)
25 May 2013 (Available – contact us)
15 June 2013 (Available – contact us)
21 September 2013 ((Available – contact us)
5 October 2013 (Available – contact us)
12 October 2013 (Available – contact us)
19 October 2013 (Available – contact us)
26 October 2013 (Available – contact us)
2 November 2013 (Available – contact us)
5 April 2014 (Available – contact us)
12 April 2014 (Available – contact us)
3 May 2014 (Available – contact us)
10 May 2014 (Available – contact us)

About Us

An Australian / Kurdish joint venture, Kurdistan Adventures combines local knowledge with Western tour operations management. We pride ourselves on immersing our small groups of travelers in Iraqi Kurdistan culture with safety, security and professionalism.

The management team of Kurdistan Adventures is deeply passionate about Kurdistan and all are based in the Iraqi Kurdistan region. Our intimate local knowledge and connections within the region allow us to offer you the best possible tour experience with access to sights not always available to foreign companies.



We work closely with our suppliers, the majority of whom are local Kurdish based businesses. This not only allows us to keep our costs down (and thus passed on to you), but means that the money stays within the local communities we visit, interact and touch as part of our adventure.

Client safety and security is our priority. We are operating escorted tours within Iraqi Kurdistan at this time because we believe it is safe to do so.

The management team of Kurdistan Adventures liaises closely with the Kurdistan Government and a Kurdish registered risk management advisory, who are able to provide security intelligence from a wide range of sources in assessing whether the itinerary should operate. This means that if we believe that a tour cannot be conducted due to a change in the security situation (currently assessed at very good), we will either make changes to the tour as planned, or not conduct the tour.

Key dates

Start of Tour - Day 1

Day 1 Erbil (arrive and transfer - free day)

Day 2 Erbil

Day 3 Erbil, Ain Sifni, Lalish and Dohuk

Day 4 Dohuk and Zakho

Day 5 Dohuk, Amadiya, Barzan, Gali Ali Beg Canyon, Shaqlawa, Erbil

Day 6 Erbil, Koi Sanjaq (Koya), Dukan, Sulymaniya

Day 7 Sulymaniya, Ahmad Awa, Halabja

Day 8 Sulymaniya (or return to Erbil)

End of Tour - Day 8

Tour Map (click on this [link](#) for the larger version)



Our itinerary (may vary slightly dependent on departure date)

Saturday - Day 1 Erbil



Arrive and transfer to the hotel. After a meet and initial briefing, the remainder of Day 1 is free to either relax or explore at your own leisure.

Accommodation in Erbil.

Sunday - Day 2 Erbil

We formally begin our adventure by exploring on foot the capital city of Erbil, one of the oldest continually inhabited cities in the world and in our opinion, becoming one of the new hot spots of the Middle East.



We visit the Erbil Civilisation Museum and the historic Citadel (Qalat Hawler), one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world, as well as the Kurdish Textile Museum, Grand Mosque and the Citadel Bath.



After lunch, we continue on to the Christian suburb of Ainkawa visiting St Joseph's Church before returning in the afternoon to the Qaysari Bazaar, a labyrinth of streets and alleys selling everything from fascinating antiques to sweet delights.



In the evening, we enjoy dinner at one of the many very good restaurants in Erbil.



Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner.
Accommodation in Erbil.

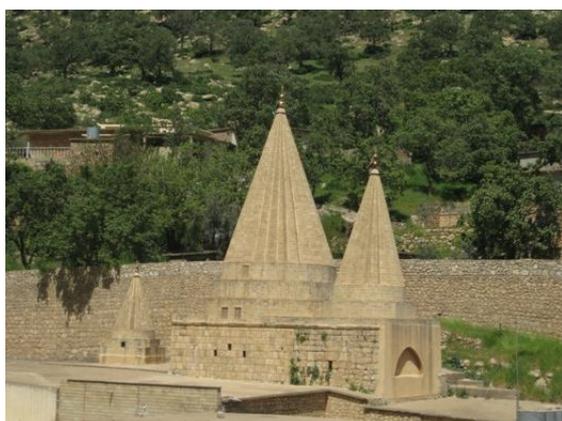
Monday - Day 3 Erbil, Ain Sifni, Lalish and Dohuk



After breakfast, we depart for Ain Sifni and nearby Lalish, home to the followers of the Yazidi faith where we walk barefoot through the Sanctuary and according to some, the resting place of Noah's Ark. We also visit the White Spring, an underground spring and baptismal pool.

We continue exploring by heading to Dohuk and visiting the oldest church in the region, the Church of St Ith Laha and sampling the fresh fruit juice over lunch that Dohuk is well known for.

After lunch, we spend some time at the Dohuk Art Gallery, and the Kurdish College of Art which is popular with local Kurdish artists.



In the early evening we enjoy a stroll through the Corniche promenade for a spot of people watching before settling in for dinner and drinks.



Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner.
Accommodation in Dohuk.

Tuesday - Day 4 Dohuk and Zakho

Continuing on after breakfast, we make our way to explore the Dohuk Bazaar and Grand Mosque (one of the oldest mosques in Dohuk), and located in the heart of the bazaar.



Our journey continues as we head north of Dohuk to the Dohuk Dam for a traditional Kurdish picnic lunch.

After lunch, we head towards the smaller border town (with Turkey) of Zakho to see the Delal Bridge, a stunning stone arch bridge over the Khabur river and orient ourselves with a walk through the town.



Later in the afternoon, we return to Dohuk where we have some free time to explore, take tea in one of the many chaikhanas (traditional tea houses) or even visit an



Internet café before we settle in for dinner.

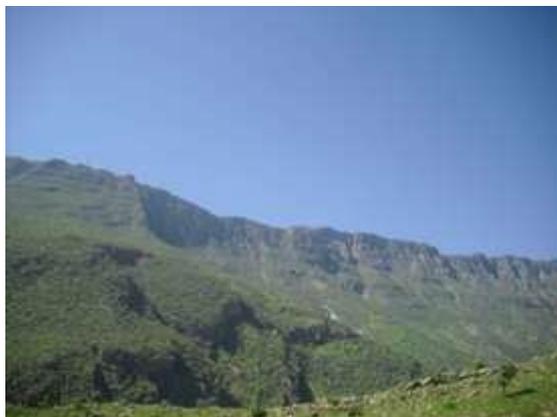
Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner.
Accommodation in Dohuk.

Wednesday - Day 5 Dohuk, Amadiya, Barzan, Gali Ali Beg Canyon, Shaqlawa, Erbil

After a filling breakfast (we will need it today), we head to the nearby mountain town of Amadiya.



The town of Amadiya, like a village in the clouds, where we visit the 400 year old Amadiya Mosque and see the minaret. The minaret was not spared from attack, with bullet holes from the Kurdish Civil War still visible.



We continue south east to the town of Barzan, the ancestral home of the Barzani family who are central to Kurdish politics in this part of the region and to visit the simple grave of Mullah Mustafa Barzani, the father of the Kurdish independence movement.

Anticipation is surely building as we retrace the steps of Sir Hamilton and the breathtaking landscape of the 12km wide Gali Ali Beg canyon towards the famous Hamilton Road and waterfalls where we take lunch at a café.



In the afternoon, we stop at the picturesque and Assyrian/Christian town of Shaqlawa (at an elevation of 960m), looking back at the Safeen mountains. Shaqlawa is well known for its organic food products such as honey and nuts, as we explore the main street and take tea here.

We finally finish our day together, arriving in the early evening back in Erbil for dinner.

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner.
Accommodation in Erbil.

Thursday - Day 6 Erbil, Dukan, Sulymaniya



Leaving Erbil after breakfast, we pass through Koya in the mountains and down through Dukan (Lake Dukan being the largest man-made lake in Iraq), arriving into Sulymaniya, the second largest city in Iraqi Kurdistan, and possibly the most relaxed and cosmopolitan, being a university town.

We witness first hand the terrible legacy of Saddam Hussein as we visit the Amna Suraka (Red Security) buildings including the many prison cells and torture chambers where thousands of people, mostly Kurds were imprisoned, tortured or killed.



After lunch, we continue our journey together with a visit to the historical Slemani Museum and an excursion to Azmar Mountain for some photos and million dinar views of Sulymania.

We retire in the evening for dinner and drinks.



Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner. Accommodation in Sulymaniya.

Friday - Day 7 Sulymaniya, Ahmad Awa, Halabja



After breakfast, we are fortunate to head to the resort village of Ahmad Awa on a Friday. Ahmad Awa is near the Iranian border and surrounded by a deep and green gorge.

Friday is the start of the weekend for Kurdish people and is also the time when many Kurdish families head to the mountains for picnics and dancing, where we also enjoy a traditional Kurdish picnic and



perhaps some dancing!

We spend some time here before visiting the nearby village of Halabja, a place of almost unspeakable horror at the hands of Saddam Hussein's military forces.

We pay our respects to the many Kurds who lost their lives here at the Monument of Halabja Martyrs and the Halabja Cemetery before returning to Sulymaniya.

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner. Accommodation in Sulymaniya.

Saturday - Day 8 Sulymaniya



After breakfast, we have some free time perhaps to explore the bazaar, or visit an Internet café before return transfers to Erbil or Sulymaniya.

Breakfast.

For further details including safety and security, frequently asked questions (FAQs) and other essential information, see our web site or please contact us.

What are you waiting for?



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