

IRAQ

DETAILED ITINERARY

21 DAYS

Jul 08/26



Step into the heart of Mesopotamia—where civilization began and ancient legends were born. Iraq is a country of profound historical and cultural richness, far beyond the headlines. Our journey begins in the enchanting port city of Basra, where echoes of Sinbad the Sailor still seem to linger. Walk through the historic old town and imagine ships setting sail for India and China. Cruise along the Shatt al-Arab waterway, a vital oil transit route that has witnessed centuries of conflict and commerce.

Venture into the Mesopotamian Marshes, a unique and endangered ecosystem. Gliding through the reeds by traditional boat, we learn about the Marsh Arab way of life and enjoy a traditional lunch at a mudhif—a reed-built guesthouse. From here, we journey to the cradle of civilization, visiting the ancient cities of Uruk, Ur, and Girsu (Tello)—home to the first writing systems, royal tombs, and the birthplace of Abraham. We explore the spiritual heart of Shia Islam during our visits to the holy cities of Najaf and Karbala. Join thousands of pilgrims at the Shrines of Imam Ali,

FACTS & HIGHLIGHTS

- 21 land days • Maximum 16 travelers • Starts in Basra and finishes in Erbil • All meals included • Witness the fragile ecosystem of the Mesopotamian Marshes by traditional boat • Visit the cradle of civilization - Uruk (the world's first city), Ur (birthplace of Abraham), and Girsu • Experience powerful religious devotion in Najaf and Karbala, two of Shia Islam's holiest cities • Walk the ancient streets of Babylon • Discover Baghdad's cultural treasures - National Museum and Tigris River Cruise • Marvel at the Fortress of Al Ukhaider • Journey through Iraqi Kurdistan

DEPARTURE DATES & PRICE

Apr 26 - May 16, 2027 - \$9995 USD

Activity Level: 2

Comfort Level: Some long drives.

ACCOMMODATIONS

We stay in comfortable accommodations with private bathrooms. Some hotels have limited facilities.

ELDERTREKS



**SMALL GROUP
EXOTIC ADVENTURES
FOR TRAVELERS 50 PLUS**

Hussein, and Abbas. We also take an excursion to the Tomb of the Prophet Ezekiel, revered across religious traditions, and walk among the 8 million graves in Wadi-us-Salaam, the world's largest cemetery.

We continue to the legendary city of Babylon, where we walk the ancient processional ways once traversed by kings, prophets, and conquerors—including Alexander the Great, who died here. Visit the iconic Ishtar Gate and learn about the enduring mysteries of the Hanging Gardens. Nearby, explore the ruins of Saddam Hussein's palace, soon to become a museum, and cruise the River Hela, created to resemble the ancient Euphrates.

Visit the dramatic Fortress of Al Ukhaider, rediscovered by Gertrude Bell. Its maze-like corridors and resident owls make for a truly atmospheric experience. We continue our travels to Baghdad, where we tour the National Museum, home to one of the world's finest collections of Mesopotamian antiquities. In this city of The Arabian Nights, we dine in both casual street cafés and elegant restaurants, mingle with locals, and cruise the Tigris River.

Baghdad is a city in revival—where street booksellers and billionaires share the same cityscape. Time permitting, we visit the American University of Baghdad, founded with a \$400 million donation in a repurposed Saddam-era palace. We also take a trip to Ctesiphon, home to the world's largest single-span brick arch.

Continuing north, we stop in Samarra and explore the ancient sites of Hatra, Nineveh, Ashur and Nimrud before reaching Erbil, one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities on Earth. From here, we begin our deep dive into Kurdistan, visiting ancient monasteries, aqueducts and the spiritual center of the Yezidi religion.

In Dohuk, explore the mountaintop city of Amidiya, the Barzan Nature Preserve, and the evolving urban centers of Sulaymaniyah and Halabja—a site of tragic history and Kurdish resilience. Our unforgettable journey ends back in Erbil, reflecting on Iraq's timeless heritage and vibrant modern identity.



Mesopotamia Marshes



Ziggurat of Ur (UNESCO)





DAY 1 • ARRIVE BASRA, IRAQ

Meet your local representative on arrival at Basra International airport and transfer to your hotel. Remainder of day at leisure until meeting your fellow travelers and tour leader at the welcome dinner this evening.

Overnight in Basra

End the day with a boat ride on the Shatt al-Arab, passing rusting warships, oil terminals, and the wreckage of one of Saddam's destroyed yachts—powerful reminders of Iraq's turbulent modern history. Return to the hotel following a classic Iraqi kebab dinner.

Overnight in Basra

DAY 2 • BASRA SITES

After breakfast, explore Old Basra, wandering along canals lined with shenashil—historic Ottoman-era villas now fading into memory. Visit a restored 19th-century merchant's home and enjoy tea in a traditional teahouse-turned-museum. Stop by a local art gallery to view contemporary Iraqi works and meet local artists.

Continue to the 18th-century Armenian Church, home to a small but resilient community, and hear stories of their history in Basra. Visit the impressive Basra Museum (subject to opening) and, if possible, tour Saddam Hussein's former yacht, now part of a university complex.

DAY 3 • CONVERGENCE OF THE TIGRIS & EUPHRATES RIVERS; EXPLORING THE CANALS OF THE MESOPOTAMIAN MARSHES & THE MARSH ARABS

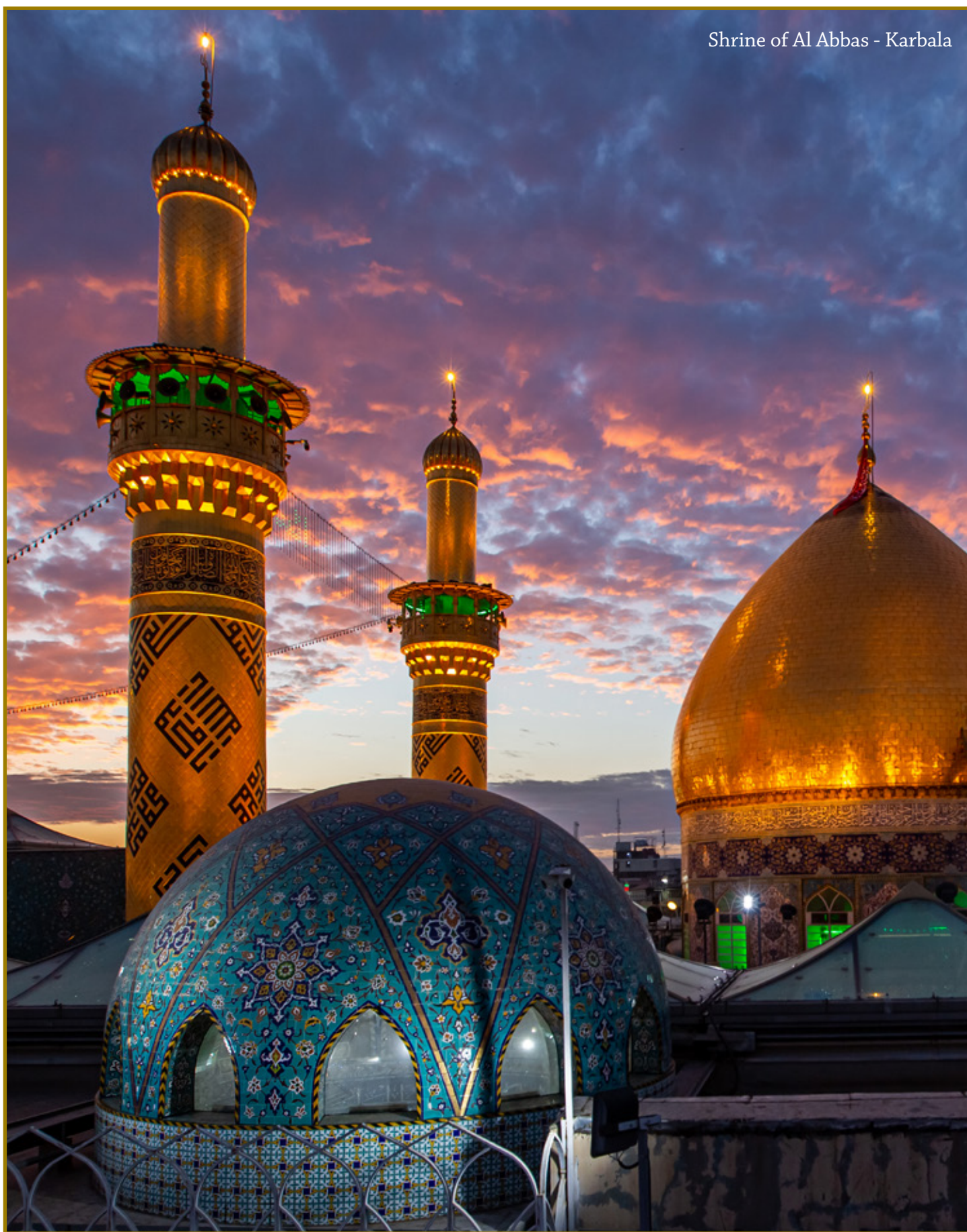
This morning, we depart for the ancient Mesopotamian town of Al-Qurnah, where the Tigris and Euphrates rivers converge. At the shrine of the Cidra el Muntaha, the 'Tree of Knowledge,' we reflect on its biblical significance, believed by some to be the tree from which Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit. We then travel to the Mesopotamian Marshes, home to the Marsh Arabs, descendants of the Sumerians, where we visit traditional mudhif reed houses. We glide through

Mesopotamia Marshes





Shrine of Al Abbas - Karbala



the marshes by boat, observing the wildlife and the fragile ecosystem that has been both destroyed and restored over the years.

We'll visit a mudhif for lunch with a local family who seek to continue the tradition of hospitality for which these unique people are famous.

Afterward, we journey to Nasiriyah, with its busy souk, before checking into our hotel. Time permitting, we can explore the local market before the day ends.

Overnight in Nasiriya

DAY 4 • THE ANCIENT CITIES OF SUMER

This morning, we drive to the magnificent ziggurat of Ur, the former Sumerian metropolis, often called "Iraq's answer to the pyramids" or their precursors. Most scholars believe it to be the birthplace of Abraham, making it revered by Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. While inhabited since prehistoric times, Ur rose to prominence in the 27th century BC before declining due to political and climatic changes, including the rise of the Persian Empire, drought, and the shifting course of the Euphrates River. By the 5th century BC, it was likely uninhabited. Excavated by Victorian-era British archaeologists, only 5% of the site is uncovered. We approach the impressive ziggurat, dedicated to the moon god Nanna, with architectural similarities to the Tower of Babel.

Afterward, we visit Girsu (modern Tello), where significant archaeological discoveries, including 2,000 tablets, offer insight into ancient Mesopotamian culture. Current excavations are a collaboration between British and Iraqi archaeologists.

Overnight in Nasiriya

DAY 5 • URUK (WORLD'S OLDEST CITY); HOLY CITY OF NAJAF

This morning, we depart Nasiriyah and drive to Najaf, stopping en route at Uruk—often considered the world's first city. Inhabited since 4000 BC, Uruk is the birthplace of early human writing and is closely associated with the legendary King Gilgamesh. The site includes a massive ziggurat and remnants of temples and palaces, with some bricks still bearing traces of brilliant Lapis glaze, likely imported from Afghanistan. As we explore the ruins, we see ancient pottery shards and shells—evidence of a time when the region was covered by water. Stories of great floods, echoed in the Epic of Gilgamesh and the Bible, are believed to have originated here.

We continue to Najaf, one of Shia Islam's holiest cities, to visit the shrine of Imam Ali and the historic Great Mosque of Kufa. According to tradition, both Noah and Abraham played foundational roles in the city's history. We'll enjoy dinner at a local eatery that serves typical Middle Eastern fare.

Overnight in Najaf

DAY 6 • AL KIFL - TOMB OF THE PROPHET EZEKIEL; EXPLORE NAJAF AND WADI AL-SALAAM - WORLD'S LARGEST CEMETRY

This morning, we depart Najaf for the town of Al-Kifl, where we may catch a partial view of the 6th-century BC tomb of the prophet Ezekiel. While entry is typically restricted, our guide will attempt to secure special access. Revered by Jews, Christians, and Muslims, the site was once a synagogue and is now a mosque. Its architecture blends Islamic artistry with Hebrew inscriptions. Uniquely, its mihrab—the prayer niche—faces Jerusalem, predating the shift in Qibla to Mecca following the Prophet Mohammed's rejection by the Jews of Medina.

Returning to Najaf, we visit Wadi Al-Salaam



Malwiya Minaret (Samarra)



Al Akhdar Castle



Ctesiphon



Hatra



Cemetery, the largest in the world, covering over 2,300 acres and holding more than eight million graves. We then explore the magnificent shrine of Imam Ali, whose golden dome rises above a complex of tiled courtyards and mirrored halls. We join the throngs of pilgrims in prayer and reflection before strolling the nearby souk and returning to the hotel for dinner.

Overnight in Najaf

DAY 7 • SACRED KARBALA; UKHAIDER FORTRESS

Today we depart Najaf for Karbala, another of Iraq's most sacred cities. Karbala is home to the shrine of Imam Hussein ibn Ali, grandson of the Prophet Mohammed, and his half-brother Abbas. Both were killed in 680 AD at the Battle of Karbala, a pivotal moment when Muslims fought fellow Muslims over the rightful successor to the caliphate.

En route, we visit Al-Ukhaider Fortress, an impressive fortified residence with mysterious origins. Believed to have been built in 775 AD by a nephew of an Abbasid caliph, its architecture blends Byzantine and Islamic styles. The fortress notably captivated the 19th-century British explorer and diplomat Gertrude Bell, who helped bring attention to its restoration.

Upon arrival in Karbala, we enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before continuing to the shrines of Imam Hussein and Abbas. Built on the site of the historic battle, these stunning sanctuaries draw thousands of fervent pilgrims, many arriving on foot from across Iraq.

Overnight in Karbala

DAY 8 • ANCIENT BABYLON

After breakfast, we depart for Babylon, capital of the ancient Babylonian Empire. Known for Ham-

murabi's legal reforms in the 18th century BC, Babylon reached its peak under Nebuchadnezzar II in the 6th century BC. Saddam Hussein later spent years reconstructing the site, even stamping his name on bricks alongside those of the ancient king. We explore the reconstructed palace and the famed Processional Way, leading to the foundations of the Ishtar Gate—now in Berlin's Pergamon Museum. Nearby, we visit the restored amphitheater, linked to Alexander the Great and now home to the annual Babylon Music Festival.

Overlooking the site are the ruins of Saddam's palace—looted and abandoned, but soon to be repurposed as a museum. We walk to the man-made Hela River, created by Saddam to mimic the Euphrates, and enjoy a short boat ride. Later, we continue to Baghdad, checking into our hotel in time to relax before dinner.

Overnight in Baghdad

DAY 9 • BAGHDAD - IRAQ NATIONAL MUSEUM & THE ANCIENT ARCH OF CTESIPHON

In the 8th century BC, Baghdad became the center of the Islamic world and has served as the capital of several empires, including the Ottomans and the British colonial administration, before becoming modern Iraq's capital. Despite being damaged and rebuilt many times, the spirit of Baghdad endures. Its people are driven to restore the city's greatness, and with Iraq now among the world's top oil producers, resources may soon support that ambition.

We begin at the Iraq National Museum, home to stunning artifacts from Sumer, Assyria, Persia and Islamic traditions. After being looted in 2003, the museum has recovered and now houses many reclaimed treasures, including the restored Golden Lyre of Ur.



Save Iraqi Culture Monument - Baghdad



Martyrs Monument - Baghdad



After lunch, we drive to Ctesiphon to view the soaring arch of Taq Kasra—the largest single-span brick vault in the world. Returning to Baghdad, we dine in a stylish Tigris Village. Weather permitting, we end our day with a peaceful boat ride along the Tigris River, completing our journey through Iraq's iconic waterways.

Overnight in Baghdad

DAY 10 • BAGHDAD - ABBASID PALACE & MUTANABI STREET

After breakfast, we visit Al-Mustansiriya Madrassah, one of the oldest Islamic institutions of higher learning, founded in 1227 by Abbasid Caliph Al-Mustansir. Remarkably preserved through the 1258 Mongol invasion, the madrassah stands as a testament to Baghdad's scholarly legacy. Time permitting, we'll explore the Abbasid Palace nearby—an elegant relic of Arabic-Islamic architecture, later restored by Saddam Hussein.

We then stroll Al-Mutanabbi Street, Baghdad's literary hub, once animated by poet duels and still home to colorful artists and booksellers. Nearby, a copper bazaar offers local carpets and souvenirs. After a simple lunch on the street, we visit the Martyr's Monument—two towering blue domes symbolizing life and death—honoring Iraqis lost in war.

Later, we explore the Baghdad Antique Bazaar, known for rare art, amber carvings, and fine carpets. Tea or coffee in its charming café provides a break before dinner at a riverside cultural restaurant. Tonight's feast includes slow-roasted lamb, masgouf, and live traditional music, celebrating Iraq's enduring spirit.

Overnight in Baghdad

DAY 11 • THE MALWIYAH MINARET OF SAMARRA; MOSUL SITES

After breakfast, we will drive two and a half hours to Samarra to visit its famous mosque and tower. The

Great Mosque of Samarra, completed in 851 AD, was once among the largest mosques in the world. Though destroyed in 1278 AD by Hulagu Khan, its outer wall and the striking Malwiyah Minaret still stand. The 150-foot-high spiral minaret is an architectural marvel, though climbing is now prohibited due to safety concerns.

Continuing to Mosul, we will see the Noory Mosque, currently under renovation after its destruction by ISIS in 2017. Known for its leaning minaret, the mosque earned Mosul the nickname "the hunchback." Originally built in the 12th century, it withstood centuries of invasions before its final destruction during the Battle of Mosul. It was also the site where ISIS leader Al Baghdadi declared the Caliphate. We end the day sightseeing in Mosul's old city before checking into our hotel.

Overnight in Mosul

DAY 12 • ANCIENT HATRA, ASHUR & OLD NINEVEH

In the morning after breakfast, we travel to Hatra. This was the Parthian Empire's religious and trading center and flourished during the 1st and 2nd centuries BC. The city survived several invasions before being razed in 241 AD. It is an important archaeological site with well-preserved ruins. Every year, there is a 'Hatra Festival,' which many dignitaries and famous regional horsemen attend. If we have time, we will visit the local Sheik, who is always ready to entertain guests.

We then visit Ashur (Oal'at Sherqat) on the Tigris River. The city dates back to the 3rd millennium BC. From the 14th to the 9th century BC, the city section referred to as Nineveh was the first capital of the Assyrian Empire. It also once served as the religious capital of the Assyrians, associated with the god Ashur.

Overnight in Mosul

DAY 13 • OLD NINEVEH, NIMRUD AND ERBIL

We head to ancient Nineveh, on the eastern bank of the Tigris River. Once the capital and largest city of the Neo-Assyrian Empire, it was the world's largest city for decades. Today, Nineveh refers to eastern Mosul and gives its name to the Nineveh Governorate. Scholars now believe Nineveh—not Babylon—was home to the famed “Hanging Gardens,” built by King Sennacherib and sustained by the world's oldest aqueduct system. After over a century of searching in Babylon, British archaeologist Stephanie Dalley identified Nineveh as the likely site. Though normally closed to the public, we have special access—a rare privilege.

We then explore the ruins of Nimrud, or Kalhu, 20 miles south of Mosul. Once believed to be the biblical city of Nimrod, it was a major Assyrian hub. From here, we cross into the Kurdistan Region and continue to Erbil. We check in, enjoy dinner, and spend the night in one of Erbil's fine restaurants.

Overnight in Erbil

DAY 14 • LALISH - SACRED PILGRIMAGE SITE OF THE YEZIDIS; ANCIENT SITES EN ROUTE TO DUHOK

We depart for Gaugamela, the historic battlefield where Alexander the Great defeated King Darius III. Next, we visit the 4th-century Dayro d-Mor Matay (St. Matthew's Monastery), one of eastern Christendom's most revered sites, in near-continuous use for almost 2,000 years.

We then head to Jirwan, home to the oldest known aqueduct bridge, built under Sennacherib in 690 BC. This marvel, part of an ancient system that watered Nineveh's gardens, features massive hand-carved stones engraved with the story of this engineering feat—revealing the “hidden message of Sennacherib”.

Lunch is at Newroz Restaurant, a well-known stop for travelers, offering simple local cuisine. Afterward, we visit Lalish, the sacred pilgrimage site of the Yezidis, a mysterious people whose traditions may link to ancient Zoroastrianism.

We'll enjoy dinner at the hotel's restaurant with stunning views of the city.

Overnight in Duhok

DAY 15 • AL OOSH - TOMB OF NAHUM (OLD TESTAMENT PROPHET); MOUNTAIN MONASTERY; MONGUL CEMETRY

After breakfast, we will visit Al Oosh and see the tomb of Nahum, the Old Testament Prophet (7th Century BC). The tomb is situated next to the early Christian Mar Gorgis Monastery and Mar Mekha Churches. We will then ascend to a 7th-century monastery in the mountains above the tomb. Six hundred monks once inhabited the caves around the monastery, and there is a Mongol cemetery across the valley where attackers were buried after one of many attempts to destroy it. The monastery is carved out of the mountains about two miles from Alqosh, 28 miles north of Mosul (ancient Nineveh prophesied against by Nahum).

Founded about 640 A.D., the monastery was the official residence of the patriarchs of the Eliya line of the Church of the East from 1551 to the 18th century. After the union with Rome in the early 19th century, it became a prominent monastery of the Chaldean Church (Eastern Rite Catholic). It is named after Rabban Hormizd, who founded it when he fled persecution in Diyarbakir, Turkey. He is buried within the sanctuary.

Overnight in Duhok



Nimrod Relief

DAY 16 • ANCIENT CITY OF AMADIYA; SHANIDAR 'NEANDERTHAL' CAVE

We depart for Amadiya, an ancient city perched at 4,600 feet above stunning mountain landscapes. Its founding remains unknown, though it was a key Assyrian stronghold around 700 B.C. Fed by a geothermal spring, the city was once nearly impenetrable. On the eastern side stands Bab Zebar, the City Gate, built between 500–600 A.D. We pass the ruins of an ancient synagogue, a remnant of the once-thriving Jewish community brought here by King Sennacherib. Local legend says the Magi began their journey from this very place.

After lunch, we travel through the scenic Barzan region to visit the Barzan Memorial, honoring victims of the genocide committed by Saddam Hussein. We also learn about Mullah Mustafa Barzani, founder of modern Kurdistan, and may visit his memorial.

Driving through the Soran District, we stop near Shanidar 'Neanderthal' Cave, where some of the world's most important prehistoric remains were discovered, including the most famous Neanderthal, "Nandy." Time permitting, we can climb up to this historic site before continuing on.

Dinner is at the village of Rezan, Kurdistan's most famous fish restaurant (other dishes are also served).

Overnight in Barzan

DAY 17 • HISTORIC HAMILTON ROAD TO BEKHAL WATERFALL; TO SULAYMANIYAH

We travel along the remarkable Hamilton Road, a historic engineering achievement carved through the mountains by Alexander Hamilton to connect Shaqlawa to Iran. We walk a stretch of this ancient route before stopping at Bekhal Waterfall to enjoy tea or coffee amid the natural beauty.

Reluctantly leaving the Rawanduz region, we head toward Sulaymaniyah, passing Lake Dokan and stopping for lunch at Kosratynwe, a traditional Kurdish roadside restaurant popular with locals.

Known as "Suly," Sulaymaniyah was founded in the late 18th century and is relatively young compared to Erbil. The city is home to key cultural sites, including the Amna Suraka Museum, documenting the atrocities committed against the Kurds under Saddam Hussein, and the Sulaymaniyah Museum, which houses Kurdish, Iraqi, and Persian artifacts.

Upon arrival, we can explore the vibrant bazaar, famous for its sweets, especially "Manna," a nougat-like treat spiced with cardamom and nuts. Those who prefer may head directly to the hotel.

We'll enjoy dinner and a spectacular view at the hotels' revolving rooftop restaurant.

Overnight in Sulaymaniyah

DAY 18 • SULAYMANIYAH SITES

In the morning, we visit the Red House (Amna Suraka), the former intelligence headquarters where many atrocities were committed under Saddam Hussein. This haunting site offers a powerful insight into the suffering endured by the Kurdish people. We then visit the Sulaymaniyah Museum of Antiquities, home to Kurdistan's most extensive collection of ancient artifacts. A meeting with the museum director may be arranged (subject to availability) to discuss how the museum safeguarded its treasures through war and unrest.

After lunch at one of Sulaymaniyah's top local restaurants, we depart for Halabja. On March 16, 1988, Saddam Hussein launched a chemical attack here, killing at least 5,000 and injuring thousands more. We visit the Halabja Museum and Memorial Cemetery, a sobering tribute to the victims of this atrocity.

Time permitting, we continue to Byara, near the Iran border, to explore local crafts. We then return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

Overnight in Sulaymaniyah

Shanidar 'Neanderthal' Cave





DAY 19 • ZARZI/QIZQAPAN CAVE; TO ERBIL - CHOLI MINARET AND DINNER AT 'TEACHER'S CLUB'

After breakfast, we drive back to Erbil, stopping en route at one of Kurdistan's most significant historic sites—Zarzi/Qizqapan Cave. This location features two key elements: a rare Zarzian site dating back to 18,000–8000 BC and a Median-era tomb from around 500–300 BC, often linked to ancient legends.

We then continue to Koysinjaq (Koya), an old Jewish city, to visit a restored caravanserai once used by Silk Road travelers. We pause at a scenic vantage point offering sweeping views across the region, with time for photos. Lunch will be at a traditional local restaurant along the way.

Time permitting, upon arriving in Erbil, we visit the Choli Minaret (1190–1232 A.D.), a city landmark. Nearby stands a statue of the celebrated poet Mudhafaria Al-Din Abu Sa'eed Al-Kawkaboori—visitors often climb into his lap for a photo.

We then check in to the hotel and enjoy dinner at the popular "Teacher's Club," frequented by journalists and internationals.

Overnight in Erbil

DAY 20 • 8,000-YEAR-OLD CITADEL OF ERBIL, CONSIDERED THE WORLD'S OLDEST CONTINUOUSLY INHABITED CITY; FAREWELL DINNER

Depending on the day, we begin with a visit to the Ainkawa Assyrian Museum, recently renovated with support from USAID. (Please note the museum may be closed for holidays.) We explore the 8,000-year-old Citadel of Erbil, considered the world's oldest continuously inhabited city. Once known as Urbellum or Arbella, it may have been visited by Abraham and housed a temple to the goddess Ishtar. Darius III fled here after his defeat by Alexander the Great at Gaugamela.

A UNESCO-led restoration is currently underway, and we may meet with the Citadel Restoration Project Director (subject to availability) for an overview. We tour the Textile Museum, located in a 220-year-old home, showcasing Kurdish dresses, rugs, jewelry, weapons, and regional artifacts. We also visit the Gem and Stone Museum, the Jihan University Art Gallery, and the new Citadel Museum.

Later, we explore the Oaysari Bazaar and, time permitting, an underground antique shop. After freshening up at the hotel, we enjoy a farewell dinner with local artists, cinematographers, and musicians.

Overnight in Erbil

DAY 21 • DEPART ERBIL

Enjoy breakfast in the morning, then transfer to the airport for your flight home.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. HOW BIG ARE THE GROUPS?

Each group is limited to 16 participants. Small groups are an important ingredient in adventure travel. Small groups allow for more interaction and more personalized service throughout the itinerary.

2. WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE?

All accommodations throughout; all meals, starting with dinner on day 1 and finishing with breakfast on departure day (i.e. the last day of the ElderTreks tour); bottled drinking water throughout the trip; all internal transportation; airport transfers on day 1 and departure day (i.e. the last day of the ElderTreks tour); all day trips and entrance fees as outlined in the itinerary; tips for hotels (portage), national guide, bus driver, restaurants and spot guides; services of a trip leader.

3. WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE?

International flights, tips to ElderTreks tour leader, alcoholic drinks, visas and travel insurance.

4. ARE THESE “EDUCATIONAL” TOURS?

Yes, in the broadest sense of the word, “educational”. We visit museums and local villages. We also have talks and discussions on many aspects of Iraqi history and culture, but this is only one aspect of what we do.

We believe that it is equally educational to meet new people on a non-commercial basis, visit their homes and even try to learn a few words in the native language. Sometimes the most “educational” moments are spent having a cold drink with locals in a street market.

5. HOW DO WE TRAVEL DURING THE TOUR?

All land transportation is included in the land price of the trip. We have our own vehicles for road travel — we use a van or coach. We also use boats in the Mesopotamian marshes and on the Shatt al-Arab river in Basra.

6. WHAT ARE OUR ACCOMMODATIONS LIKE?

We stay in comfortable, well located accommodations with private bathrooms throughout.

7. WHAT ABOUT THE WEATHER?

Temperatures are hotter in the south with lows around 14 C (or mid 50's F) and highs into the low 30's C (mid 80's F)

Temperatures are cooler in the north with lows going down to 6 C (or 43 F) to daily highs around 18/19 C (or around 70 F)

There is not much rainfall in the south but typically rains more in the north. Rainfall in Iraq is seasonal and occurs mostly during the winter season during December through February for most of the country except in the north and northeast, where the rainy season is from November to April.

8. WHEN IS PAYMENT DUE?

A non-refundable deposit of \$500 USD (plus insurance if you desire it) is due as soon as you decide to go and will reserve your place on the tour. The balance of the land payment is due 120 days before departure. Cancellation charges are applicable and these are outlined in the “Terms & Conditions” section of our brochure.

9. IS MEDICAL INSURANCE REQUIRED?

Insurance coverage is not included in the cost of your trip. Please note that medical insurance is not required for this adventure but is recommended. ElderTreks offers comprehensive travel insurance and we are happy to provide you with a quote if you call our office. If you are purchasing insurance elsewhere, please ensure you provide the details to ElderTreks as soon as possible.

**Please note those travelers with pre-existing medical conditions must take out travel insurance at the time of deposit*

10. WHAT MEALS ARE INCLUDED?

All meals are included, starting with dinner on day 1 and finishing with breakfast on departure day. In many cases, we simply order a number of shared dishes, so that we can try everything.

11. WHAT SHOULD I TAKE ON THE TOUR?

There is a detailed “What to Take” list in our Trip Kit, which we will send to you after you have booked the trip.

12. CAN YOU ARRANGE MY FLIGHTS?

We would be happy to take care of your air arrangements. ElderTreks offers personalized flight itineraries — not group flights. Stop over enroute, come in a few days early, or extend your stay. Call us for a customized itinerary.

13. WHAT IF I WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION?

If you have any further questions about the adventure, please call our office for more details. A Trip Specialist will be happy to answer your questions. A Trip Kit containing further details on the destination will be sent to you once you have booked the trip.





Shrine of Imam Abbas - Karbala



