

BEIRUT: A CITY OF CONTRASTS



Beirut, a vibrant city of many contrasts, offers its visitors unique atmosphere, Christian as well as Muslim quarters and friendly people.

Going from the Beirut Rafic Hariri International Airport through the streets of the Lebanon's capital at night might be quite an alarming experience for some visitors. Empty dark streets with war damaged houses do not seem to be the attraction that brings tourists here and they look rather spooky. However, few hours later in other parts of the city one can see that Beirut certainly is a vibrant city full of people and traffic chaos.

There are lots of contrasts and paradoxes in the city. It is known as an ancient Phoenician port that has risen from ashes again and again, even after numerous conflicts that damaged the city quite badly. As Cestovanie.sk points out, **the city offers a mix of cultures and surprising contrasts.**

Tourists can see churches next to mosques and expensive Ferraris parked next to cheap old vans. There are new skyscrapers as well as small houses with bullet holes in their facades. The remnants of war conflicts did not disappear even though developers have transformed the whole city in a big construction site.

Although the city was divided in the war into Christian and Muslim parts, **local people create tolerant atmosphere.** For example the Hamra Street, one of the economic centers of the city, is in Muslim part of Beirut and one can see people drinking beer there. However a veiled woman is quite rare. There are naturally also other parts of the city where people are not so open-minded. Still, the city is worth discovering especially to those looking for some adventure.

Date: 2010-12-06

Article link: <http://www.tourism-review.com/beirut-an-incredible-city-full-of-contrasts-news2525>