

## IRAQI KURDISTAN - STUDY TOUR



Guaranteed departure

### Tour Date:

04. October 2018 to 14. October 2018

After decades of war and violence, Iraqi Kurdistan is today experiencing profound economic and social changes. The mushrooming of gated communities, grand shopping malls and luxurious restaurants points towards the astounding new wealth acquired by some parts of the society. While some regard Iraqi-Kurdistan as predestined to become the new Dubai, most of its population has other priorities. The region is experiencing a deep economic crisis and many people are without a job. Other concerns range from protecting the environment to starting a process to reconcile the violent past with the present and creating a more just society.

### Our focus

An essential part of this trip is engaging with civil society activists in Iraqi Kurdistan. What do women's rights activists, both the old and new Peshmerga, journalists, and ordinary citizens think about the politics and society in today's Iraqi Kurdistan?

We will learn about the everyday realities, hopes and wishes of people living in historic villages, like Amadiye and Lalesh, or in major cities such as Sulaymaniya, Dohuk, and Erbil.

Led by our seasoned partners from Go-Wild-Kurdistan, we'll hike on mountain paths once used by the Peshmerga and explore nature in its historical context.

Price

Tour Price

EUR 1,689

### Tour Price

Reduced Price

EUR 1,289

### Reduced Price



#### Tour Overview

START:	Erbil
FINISH:	Dohuk
DURATION:	11 days / 10 nights
TRANSPORT:	Private bus with air-condition
ACCOMMODATION:	Guesthouses / mid-range hotels
SINGLE ROOM SUPPLEMENT:	EUR 400
TOUR LANGUAGE:	Tour language is English, Meetings partially in Kurdish with translation

#### Travel itinerary and program

### Tour program:

#### Day 1: Erbil

- Get-Together, Introduction to Program
- Input on Politics, History and Society of Iraqi Kurdistan
- Dinner at a fantastic Jordanian Restaurant

#### Day 2: Sulaimaniyeh

- Bus Transfer to Sulaimaniyeh
- Visit of the former prison of Saddam Hussein's Baath party which now hosts an political and art exhibitions
- Lunch and Freetime in the Market Area
- Meeting with representatives of women centres, Discussion on the situation of (marginalised) women in Iraqi-Kurdistan
- Visit of the former Tobacco Factory that is now home to several Art Initiatives

#### Day 3: Sulaimaniyeh / Halabja (site of the Baath regime's toxic gas attack in 1988)

- Guided Tour in the National Museum that hosts archeological Treasures of different Epochs
- Transfer to Halabja: Visit of the memorial site and Talk with affected persons
- Discussion with Activists of an Independent Radio Station
- Picnic and walk in the mountainous Hawraman region
- Dinner with Environmental Activists

#### Day 4: Erbil

- Transfer to Erbil
- Meeting with International Organizations that work in the fields of Humanitarian Aid and Culture
- Afternoon: Visit of the 4000 year old citadell which hosts several museums
- Free time in the Langa Bazar next to the citadell
- Dinner in Christian Ain Kawa, visit of a local church and optional visit of a bar

#### Day 5: Erbil

- Visit of the Parliament, meeting with deputies - Topic: the Political System in Kurdistan, influence of the Parliament
- Meeting with Kurdish Activists in Syria
- Reflection: Joint Processing of the Experiences at Sami Abdul Rahman Park
- Dinner with Internationals working in Erbil - Space for informal talks

#### Tag 6: Dohuk and Surroundings

- Transfer to Dohuk
- Meeting with Students of Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Dohuk
- Visit of the Jinda Center for female victims of sexual violence
- Sunset on Zawa Mountain, view towards Mossul Dam and Niniveh Plain: Input on the Situation of Refugees and the Fight against ISIL
- Dinner in the Assyrian Cultural Club

#### Day 7: Lalesh (Yezidi sanctuary) and al-Qosh

- Daytrip to the Yezidi sanctuary Lalesh, guided tour by a local
- Visit of the old monastery al-Qosh, Focus on Christianity in Iraq
- Early Evening: Possibility to buy Things for the Hike
- Dinner at Dohuk Dam

#### Day 8: Amediyeh, Gara Mountains

- Daytrip to Amediye, a 3000-year old city located on a mountain plateau
- Visit of the water mill which produces the country's best sesame paste
- Afternoon: Beginning of hike with Go-Wild Kurdistan in the Gara Mountains
- Overnight Stay in Tents near a Mountain Village

#### Day 9: Gara Mountains / Dohuk

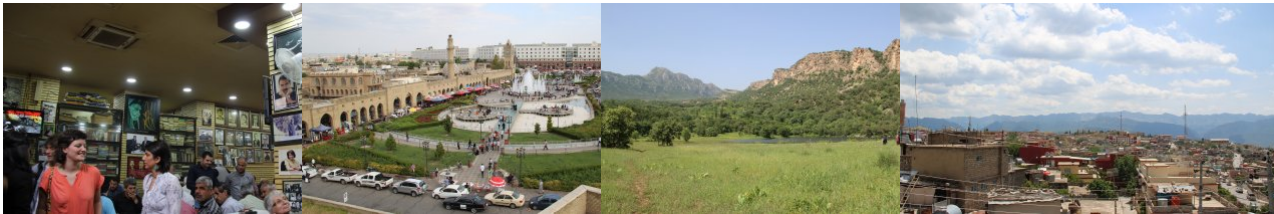
- Full Day Hike
- Return to Dohuk in the Evening
- Reception of a Conference on Minorities at Dohuk University

#### Day 10: Dohuk

- Attendance of the Conference at Dohuk University
- Evaluation of the Trip
- Final Dinner

#### Day 11: Dohuk / Erbil

Departure to Airport



#### Sulaimaniyya

Sulaimaniyya is the cultural capital of the Kurdish part of Iraq. Known for its university, the city is the second biggest in the autonomous region Kurdistan, counting about 1.607.000 inhabitants.

#### Erbil

Erbil is the capital and seat of the autonomous Kurdish government in Northern Iraq. Its Christian quarter Ain Kawa houses many Assyrians, some of whom originating from Mosul or the Niniveh plains where they had to flee the so called Islamic State.

#### Dohuk and Surroundings

Around Dohuk - literally translated „little village“ - there are many refugee camps. We will discover the fantastic landscape of the nearby Gara Mountains on a two-day hike.

#### Amediyeh

This 3000 year old city's location on a mountain plateau offers spectacular sights.



#### Lalesh

The Yezidi sanctuary is located in a beautiful, calm valley.



#### al-Qosh

The ancient monastery hosts caves that have been inhabited for more than a thousand years.

Tour Team

### Schluwa Sama

Schluwa earned an MSc in Middle East Politics at SOAS, University of London and an MA in Politics and Economics of the Middle East at Philipps University Marburg, Germany. Currently, she is a PhD candidate at the Centre for Kurdish Studies, University of Exeter. Her research focuses on the political economy of Iraqi Kurdistan. As a guide for political study excursions to Iraqi Kurdistan, it is most important that participants come to a critical understanding of their very own positions towards West Asia.



Christoph Dinkelaker

Christoph is Co-Founder of Alsharq and today the Co-Director of Alsharq Travel. Due to his studies of Political Sciences, History and Islamic Studies he has been working on and in the region for many years. In 2015, he conducted his first Alsharq tour in Iraqi-Kurdistan. Even today, he is overwhelmed by the Kurdish people's openness and the stunning beauty of the mountains.

**Reisehinweise Ende:**

It is possible to skip the hike at the end of the tour and stay in Dohuk. We offer to organize some alternative meetings.

*In case the minimum number of participants cannot be reached, we reserve the right to cancel the tour. Therefore, we highly suggest to not book the flights until the tour is officially confirmed from our side.*

*Please do not hesitate to contact us if there are any more questions.*





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