



Travelling The Unknown
Around Iraq

IRAQ ARBAEEN TOUR

Plan A: 6 days / 5 nights
Plan B: 10 days / 9 nights

Introduction:

- Embark on a deeply spiritual and transformative journey as you join millions of pilgrims in commemorating Arbaeen, the largest annual pilgrimage in the world. This sacred event marks 40 days after Ashura, the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS), a symbol of justice and sacrifice. For those joining Plan B, you'll also see northern Iraq, an experience completely different to our pilgrimage in the south.

Highlights:

- Joining millions of pilgrims on a journey of spirituality and being at the heart of the pilgrimage experience at the Mawkabs.
- Seeing the beautiful Islamic architecture at some of the most important Islamic sites in the world, especially for Shias.
- Iraq's ancient historical sites of Babylon, Hatra, giving the country its title as "the cradle of civilisations".



DAY 1 August 8, 2025

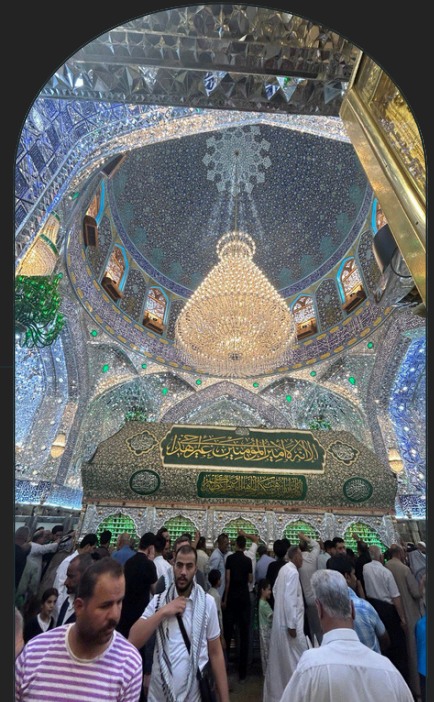
BAGHDAD

- Airport pickup from Baghdad international airport, and check in to our hotel in Karrada area.
- We will have a pre tour meeting in the hotel, explaining the itinerary and the dos and don'ts here in Iraq. We will also talk about the significance of the Arbaeen pilgrimage and the importance for Shia Muslims.
- We will have an evening tour in Baghdad, seeing the bustling street life in the Karrada or Adhamiyah area, as well as visiting Tahrir Square (and a famous monument of Baghdad).
- We will likely spend a long time out tonight, helping our bodies to adjust to being awake at night, in preparation for the walk.
- Overnight in Baghdad

BABYLON & NAJAF

- In the late morning/ afternoon, we will visit the legendary Babylon, the city of Hammurabi and Nebuchadnezzar II. Walk through the reconstructed Ishtar Gate, a stunning blue-tiled portal once part of the city's protective walls. Wander along the Processional Way and learn about the Hanging Gardens, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World (though their exact location remains a mystery!). We will also visit Saddam Hussein's palace, perched dramatically on a hill overlooking the ancient ruins.
- We will then drive on to the holy city of Najaf. This is where most pilgrims, including us, start their journey by foot to Karbala. Upon arrival in Najaf we will visit Wadi Al-Salam, the world's largest cemetery, rich in history and cultural significance. We know the place with the best view! We will also visit the majestic Imam Ali (AS) Shrine, a stunning site of worship.
- Just like the previous night, we will be out until quite late at night, exploring what the city has to offer and soaking up the pilgrimage vibes. The city will be bustling 24/7.
- Enjoy a delicious dinner. Overnight in Najaf

DAY 2 August 9, 2025



NAJAF & FOOD PREPARATION

- After waking up late, we will head out to visit the mosque of Kufa, one of the holiest Islamic sites in Iraq, and also where the Imam Ali (peace upon him) was murdered.
- We will then join a local family and help to prepare food for the pilgrims. This is a communal process and something almost all locals take part in at this time of the year.
- In the evening, we will join one of the Mawkabs (see end of itinerary for definition), where we will help to distribute the food that we previously helped prepare to the pilgrims, truly soaking up the vibes of Arbaeen.
- We will then take part in the pilgrimage, walking around 20km until the early hours of the morning with the pilgrims, and watching the sunrise. We will stop when the weather becomes too hot.
- We will then sleep at a Mawkab or local house on the route.

DAY 3 August 10, 2025



DAY 4

August 11, 2025



ROAD TO KARBALA

- After waking up, we will continue our pilgrimage and continue walking towards Karbala.
- On the way, we will stop by many different Mawkabs, some of them offering us food, others religious teaching, book stores, massage centers and more. We will rest at multiple intervals - it will be tiring but a truly spiritual and once in a lifetime experience.
- Late at night (or early the following morning), we will finally arrive in Karbala.
- We will soak up the vibes in Karbala city, which will be sprawling with millions and millions of pilgrims. We will attempt to walk towards the Imam Hussein shrine, but chances are that it will be insanely busy. Regardless, the atmosphere in the entire city will be unique.
- Early in the morning of the 12th, after filling our stomachs with food, we will return to Baghdad. We will check into our hotel and sleep.

BAGHDAD

- After arriving in Baghdad in the morning and checking into our hotel, we will spend much of the day sleeping and relaxing (much needed!) and waiting for the temperature to get cooler.
- We will then head out to visit the Al Shaheed monument commemorating the Iraq - Iran war.
- In the late afternoon, once the weather gets cooler, we will explore some important Baghdad sites, such as Muttanabi street and the nearby antique market. This area showcases the soul of Baghdad and it's cultural heritage.
- In the evening, you have the opportunity to go out to a cafe for tea and a shisha in a bustling neighbourhood.

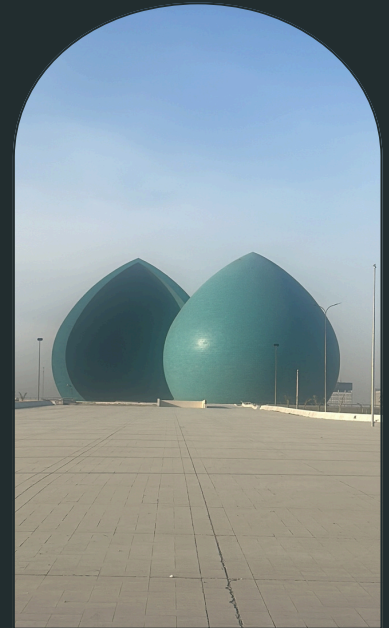
SAMARRA, HATRA/ASHUR, MOSUL

- **End of Group A:** End of the Arbaeen Walking tour. Airport drop offs.
- **Continuation of Group B:** Start of Northern Iraq Tour
- In the morning, we will begin our journey with a visit to the iconic Samarra Minaret, a spiraling masterpiece of Islamic architecture from the Abbasid era. Climb to the top for panoramic views.
- Head north to the UNESCO World Heritage site of Hatra or Ashur. At Hatra, explore the well-preserved ruins of a Parthian empire city, with its grand temples and fortress-like walls. If visiting Ashur, discover the ancient Assyrian capital with its rich archaeological remains, including ziggurats and palaces.
- Continue to Mosul, a vibrant city rich in history. We'll sample our favourite ice cream shop in Iraq, before relaxing at the hotel.



DAY 5

August 12, 2025



DAY 6

August 13, 2025

DAY 7

August 14, 2025



MOSUL, BAKHDIDA, DUHOK

- We will start our day in Mosul's Old City, exploring its historical treasures. Walk through its narrow alleys to see landmarks like the reconstructed Al-Nuri Mosque and the beautifully restored Al-Tahira Church, symbols of the city's resilience and diverse heritage.
- Travel to the Assyrian town of Bakhdida (Qaraqosh), a historic Christian center which was occupied by ISIS during the war. Visit the local cathedral, and explore the town's cultural heritage through its traditional houses and local stories. We will also visit a local museum for Assyrian heritage. This town has basically the opposite vibes of Arbaeen in Karbala.
- We will continue on to Lalish, a two hour drive, which is the holy city for the Yazidi religion. Here, we will visit the main temple and learn about the Yazidi faith.
- We will continue on to Duhok city, where we will spend the night.

AMEDI, SHANIDAR CAVE, RAWANDUZ

- We will have breakfast in Duhok's famous Martyr's cafe, before heading on to the hilltop town of Amedi, a 3000 year old settlement with beautiful panoramic views.
- Then, we will go to the famous Shanidar Cave, an important archaeological site where Neanderthal remains and artifacts were discovered. Learn about the cave's significance.
- Then, we will head to Rawanduz, known for its spectacular gorges and natural beauty. Check into your accommodation and visit local viewpoints like the Rawanduz Canyon.
- Overnight in Rawanduz

DAY 8

August 15, 2025

DAY 9

August 16, 2025

WATERFALLS & ERBIL

- After waking up, we will visit two of Iraq's most famous waterfalls in the Rawanduz area. Namely, Geli Ali Beg and Bekhal.
- We will then take the scenic Hamilton Road, built in the 1930s and has some gorgeous scenery. Then, we will drive to Erbil.
- Upon arrival in Erbil, we will visit the ancient citadel and wander through the Kayseri marketplace. This is the perfect place to get last-minute souvenirs from your trip. We will also visit a hidden gun shop, where Peshmerga fighters who were fighting against ISIS would get their weapons repaired. It remains highly popular until this day.
- We will have a final dinner together, and those who would like to go for a drink may do so at a local bar.
- Final night together in Erbil.

- Drop off at the airport
- End of tour

DEPARTURE

PLAN A: 1300 USD

PLAN B: 2300 USD

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT: CONTACT US



TO BOOK, CONTACT US

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DAY 10

August 17, 2025



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

What is a Mawkab?

Mawkabs are rest stops along the pilgrimage route, operated by volunteers and local families. These stations provide essential services to pilgrims, including:

- Food and drinks (often home-cooked meals).
- Places to rest or sleep.
- Medical aid and basic necessities.

Are we walking the entire distance from Najaf to Karbala?

No, we will only walk around 40km (or as much as we can during the timeframe). The entire distance from Najaf to Karbala, which most pilgrims walk, is around 80km.

Is food included in the tour?

The food during the pilgrimage is included. Most meals will be provided by the Mawkabs or prepared by the group. For the rest of the tour, lunches and dinners are at your own expense.

INCLUDED:

- Twin-share accommodation (single supplements are available at an additional cost) for every night of the tour.
- Entry costs to all museums, historical sites and places that we visit.
- Tourist permits and all required permissions.
- Transportation between the places mentioned in the itinerary.
- English speaking guides licensed guides
- Breakfast
- Airport pickup
- All food during the pilgrimage walk

EXCLUDED:

- The on-arrival visa fee at the border.
- Visa approval (if your nationality doesn't qualify for on-arrival visa)
- Airport drop off after the tour (arranged for a fee)
- Single supplement for those who do not want to share a room (300 USD)
- Tips for the guides (not mandatory)
- Lunch, dinner, drinks (outside the pilgrimage walk)
- Souvenirs