Lebanon and Syria Suitcase Seminar

Crossroads of History & Faith

May 8 to 21, 2011
Located at the crossroads of Asia, Europe and Africa, the present-day countries of Lebanon and Syria bear the stamp of countless civilizations that have dominated this region over the course of thousands of years, while at the same time providing a window into the heart of modern Middle Eastern life. Two of our most popular faculty leaders, Bob Gregg and Herant Katchadourian, designed this itinerary, which takes us to some of the world’s most impressive medieval and ancient ruins as well as to colorful, winding bazaars and monumental places of worship. Join them on this captivating journey!

BRETT S. THOMPSON, ’83, DIRECTOR, STANFORD TRAVEL/STUDY

Highlights

ROAM Beirut’s vibrant downtown and view the colossal acropolis of Baalbek in Lebanon.

MARVEL at the Crusader fortress of Krak des Chevaliers and the imposing citadel of Aleppo in Syria.

CROSS the Syrian desert to the Greco-Roman oasis city of Palmyra and browse aromatic souqs in Damascus.

FRONT COVER IMAGE: PALMYRA; BACK COVER IMAGE: DOMES OF CITADEL, ALEPPO

KRAK DES CHEVALIERS
**SUNDAY & MONDAY, MAY 8 & 9**
**DEPART U.S. / BEIRUT, LEBANON**
Depart the U.S. on overnight flights to Beirut. Arrive on Monday and transfer to our hotel.

**FOUR SEASONS BEIRUT**

**TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY, MAY 10 & 11**
**BEIRUT**
Spend two full days exploring this vibrant city. Take a walking tour through downtown, stopping to admire Roman-era baths, St. George Orthodox Cathedral and the Ottoman-style Mohammad al Amin Mosque. Visit the American University of Beirut, where we enjoy a tour led by students. Finally, explore Lebanon’s National Museum, situated on the unofficial border that divided East and West Beirut during the civil war, and view artifacts that were hidden by curators during the conflict.

**FOUR SEASONS BEIRUT (B,L BOTH DAYS; D ON MAY 10)**

**THURSDAY, MAY 12**
**BAALBEK / DAMASCUS, SYRIA**
Drive over the Lebanese Mountains to the Bekaa Valley and explore the monumental temples of Baalbek, a UNESCO World Heritage site known as Heliopolis during Roman times. Baalbek’s colossal structures constitute one of the most impressive examples of imperial Roman architecture in the Middle East. Visit the Armenian town and Umayyad ruins of Anjar, then continue across the border to Damascus.

**FOUR SEASONS DAMASCUS (B,L,D)**

**FRIDAY, MAY 13**
**DAMASCUS**
After decades of isolationism, Damascus has embraced modernity but it has also maintained its artisan traditions, such as silk weaving, copper engraving and inlaid woodcraft. Explore the extensive Souq al-Hamidiyya and visit the restored 18th-century Azem Palace. Meet with the keeper of the Umayyad Mosque, arguably the most significant religious structure in Syria. Visit the shrine of John the Baptist, where, according to tradition, the saint’s head is kept. **FOUR SEASONS DAMASCUS (B,L)**

**SATURDAY, MAY 14**
**KRAK DES CHEVALIERS / HAMA**
Drive to Krak des Chevaliers and explore one of the most important preserved fortresses in the world, now a UNESCO World Heritage site. Continue to the charming town of Hama, an important agricultural center renowned for its 17 giant wooden norias, or water wheels, historically used for irrigating nearby fields.

**ORIENT HOUSE (B,L,D)**

**SUNDAY, MAY 15**
**APAMEA / ALEPPO**
Visit Marqab Castle, perched atop a cliff and overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. Continue to the ancient city of Apamea, famous for its long, column-lined Cardo Maximus, the main north-south thoroughfare during Roman and Byzantine times. Continue to Aleppo, a crossroads for trade routes and a center of commerce since the second millennium BC. **SHERATON ALEPPO (B,L,D)**

**MONDAY & TUESDAY, MAY 16 & 17**
**ALEPPO**
Spend two full days in this fascinating medieval city. Explore the massive 13th-century citadel, then drive to the mountaintop Church of St. Simeon to see the remnants of the famous stone pillar upon which the hermit monk...
St. Simeon Stylites lived and preached for 37 years. Explore the Old City of Aleppo, including the 12th-century Great Mosque and the Madrassa Halawiya religious school. Wander through the souq, a labyrinth of narrow streets and stone archways forming the longest covered bazaar in the Middle East, and visit Aleppo’s historic Armenian quarter. Sheraton Aleppo (B,L BOTH DAYS; D ON MAY 17)

Wednesday, May 18
Aleppo / Palmyra
Spend a full day journeying across the Syrian Desert to the old oasis settlement of Tadmor, known in the west as Palmyra. This city, once one of the richest in the Near East, grew in importance during the Roman era as it was situated on the caravan route linking Persia, India, China and the Roman Empire. TADAMORA PALACE (B,L,D)

Thursday, May 19
Palmyra
In the 3rd century AD, Zenobia, Warrior Queen of the Palmyrene Empire, conquered Egypt and Anatolia and led a revolt against the Roman Empire. Explore the ruins of Palmyra, the capital of Zenobia’s empire, including a massive temple dedicated to Ba’al, and wander along the regal colonnaded Decumanus to the 1st-century theater. Observe the richly decorated funerary monuments that comprise the Valley of the Tombs and visit the Palmyra Archaeological Museum. TADAMORA PALACE (B,L,D)

Friday, May 20
Palmyra / Damascus
Return to Damascus and tour Syria’s National Museum. Among the museum’s prized possessions are clay tablets inscribed with the oldest alphabet in the world and frescoes depicting Biblical scenes recovered from the ruins of the 2nd-century Dura Europos Synagogue. Gather for a special farewell reception and dinner this evening. Four Seasons Damascus (B,L,D)

Saturday, May 21
Damascus / U.S.
Following breakfast, transfer to the airport for return flights to the U.S. (B)

What to Expect
We consider this to be a moderately strenuous program that is at times physically demanding and busy. Some days require early morning starts with a few long travel days. Drive times range from four to eight hours, with rest stops, and we often have a full schedule of excursions, lectures and special events. Daily programs involve one to three miles of walking, often on uneven terrain such as in old city quarters where roads and sidewalks may be cobblestoned or unpaved. Much of the walking takes place at ancient sites, such as ruins, churches and castles, where elevators are unavailable and guided tours may require climbing up and down stairs without handrails. Participants must be physically fit and in good active health. We welcome travelers 15 years of age and older on this program.
DATES
May 8 to 21, 2011 (14 days)

SIZE
Limited to 50 participants

COST *
$8,995 per person, double occupancy
$11,675 per person, single occupancy
*Association nonmembers add $200 per person

INCLUDED
12 nights of best-available hotel accommodations  12 breakfasts, 11 lunches and 8 dinners  Welcome and farewell cocktail receptions  Bottled water on all excursions and at group meals  Gratuities to porters, guides and drivers for all group activities  All tours and excursions as described in the itinerary  Transfers and baggage handling for all participants between the airport and our group hotels  Minimal medical, accident and evacuation insurance  Educational program with lecture series and pre-departure materials, including recommended reading list, a selected book, map and travel information  Services of our professional tour manager to assist you throughout the program

NOT INCLUDED
International and U.S. domestic airfare  Passport and visa fees  Immunization costs  Meals and beverages other than those specified as included  Trip-cancellation/interruption and baggage insurance  Excess-baggage charges  Personal items such as email, telephone and fax calls, laundry and gratuities for nongroup services

AIR ARRANGEMENTS
International and U.S. domestic airfare is not included in the program cost. Round-trip, economy-class airfare on Air France from San Francisco to Beirut and returning from Damascus is approximately $2,100 as of June 2010 and is subject to change without notice. Information on recommended flight itineraries will be sent by our designated agent.
Deposit & Final Payment
A $1,000 deposit is required to hold space for the Lebanon and Syria Suitcase Seminar. Final payment is due 120 days prior to departure.

Cancellations & Refunds
Deposits and any payments are fully refundable, less a $500-per-person cancellation fee, until 120 days prior to departure. After that date, refunds can be made only if the program is sold out and your place(s) can be resold, in which case a $1,000-per-person cancellation fee will apply. We recommend trip-cancellation insurance; applications will be sent to you.

Insurance
Stanford Travel/Study provides all travelers who are U.S. or Canadian citizens with minimal medical, accident and evacuation coverage under our group-travel insurance policy. Our group policy is intended to provide minimal levels of protection while you are traveling on this program. We strongly recommend that you subscribe to optional baggage and trip-cancellation insurance. A brochure offering such insurance will be mailed with your confirmation about one week after we receive your deposit. The product offered in this brochure includes a special Waiver of Pre-Existing Conditions and coverage for Financial Insolvency and Terrorist Acts if you postmark your insurance payment within 15 days of the date listed on the confirmation letter.

Eligibility
We encourage membership in the Alumni Association as the program cost for nonmembers is $200 more than the members’ price. Stanford alumni may become Annual ($75) or Life ($495) Members. Stanford parents, faculty, staff, interns, residents and fellows may become Installment Members ($90 down, $115/year for four years) or Life Members ($495). Nonalumni may become Life Affiliates (one-time fee, $650). Parents and their children under 21 may travel on one membership. For more information or to purchase a membership, visit www.stanfordalumni.org/membership or call (650) 725-0692.

Responsibility
The Stanford Alumni Association, Stanford University and our operators act only as agents for the passenger with respect to transportation and exercise every care possible in doing so. However, we can assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity in connection with the service of any automobile, motorcoach, launch or any other conveyance used in carrying out this program or for the acts or defaults of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the program. We cannot accept any responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, force majeure or other causes beyond our control. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger as tour rates provide arrangements only for the time stated. We reserve the right to make such alterations to this published itinerary as may be deemed necessary. The right is reserved to cancel any program prior to departure in which case the entire payment will be refunded without further obligation on our part. The right is also reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the program. No refund will be made for an unused portion of any tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. Baggage is carried at the owner’s risk entirely. The airlines concerned are not to be held responsible for any act, omission or event during the time that passengers are not onboard their plane or conveyance. Neither the Alumni Association, Stanford University nor our operators accept liability for any carrier’s cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable ticket in connection with the tour. Program price is based on rates in effect in July 2010 and is subject to change without notice to reflect fluctuations in exchange rates, tariffs or fuel charges. As a condition of participation, all confirmed participants are required to sign a Release of Liability.

California Seller of Travel Program Registration #2048 523-50
BOB GREGG is a former dean of Memorial Church and professor emeritus of religious studies and classics at Stanford, where he has been a member of the faculty since 1987. Professor Gregg’s interests concern religions and religious competition(s) in the ancient Mediterranean world, with a concentration in the 1st to 7th centuries. His current research focuses on several “sacred stories,” which appear both in the Bible and in the Qur’an, and examines literary and artistic interpretations of these scripture narratives by Jewish, Christian and Muslim writers and painters between the 1st and 13th centuries. During our program, he will discuss various religious communities and depictions of religious themes that we will see in paintings and monuments on our itinerary.

HERANT KATCHADOURIAN is emeritus professor of psychiatry and human biology at Stanford and former president of the Flora Family Foundation. Since joining the Stanford faculty in 1966, he has served as dean of undergraduate studies and vice provost of undergraduate education. His personal history embraces several cultures. Born in Turkey to Armenian parents, he received his undergraduate and medical degrees from the American University in Beirut and his psychiatric training at the University of Rochester in New York. He has received numerous awards, including Stanford University’s Dinkelspiel Award for outstanding teaching and the Lyman Award for service to the Alumni Association. During our program, he will discuss the historical backgrounds of Phoenicia, Palmyra and the Crusades.

Faculty Leaders

Reservation Form
Lebanon and Syria Suitcase Seminar

Here is my deposit of $________ ($1,000 per person) for _____ space(s).

☐ Enclosed is my check (payable to Stanford Alumni Association) OR

☐ Charge my deposit to my:
  ☐ Visa  ☐ MasterCard  ☐ American Express

 CARD # _______________________________
 EXPIRATION DATE ____________________
 CARDHOLDER SIGNATURE ____________________ DATE ____________

Mail completed form to address on mail panel or fax to (650) 725-8675 or place your deposit online at www.stanfordalumni.org/trip?lebanonsyria2011. Please submit your reservation only once to avoid multiple charges to your account.

If this is a reservation for one person, please indicate:

☐ I wish to have single accommodations.

OR ☐ I plan to share accommodations with:

OR ☐ I’d like to know about possible roommates.
“The best trip we have ever been on by far.”

PAUL RONAN, SYRIA AND JORDAN SUITCASE SEMINAR, 2005