

CVC offers packages for diaspora to go to Lebanon

The Brazilian tour operator and travel agency has options on offer for Lebanese natives and descendants to visit their home country. They can also see the villages that their families are from.

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São Paulo – CVC, Brazil’s premier tour operator and travel agency, has packages out for Lebanese natives and descendants living in Brazil to travel to their homeland. Since last month, the company has three Lebanon travel options on offer, including Portuguese-speaking guides and minimum 6-day stays. Travelers also get time to see the places that their families came from.

According to CVC’s senior manager for Europe, Asia, Africa and Oceania products Marcelo Patelli, packages for Lebanon were available before, but not ones specifically targeting descendants – only standalone trips whenever there’d be demand for them, with English- or Spanish-speaking guides.

One of the new packages is a basic, six-day trip with departure and arrival dates set, and travelers can choose what to do on what day. “It affords flexibility for people to see Lebanon in their own terms,” says Patelli.

Another six-day option comes with a set tour schedule covering sites including the capital Beirut; the Jeita Grotto complex, which was inhabited during prehistory; Tripoli, which was established by Phoenicians and is now the second most populated city in Lebanon; Byblos, considered to be the world’s oldest city; Baalbek, which is home to Roman Empire ruins; and Ksara, an area famed for winemaking.

A third option combines the set package with an additional three days so travelers can see the places their families came from. All they need to do is get in

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Beirut: the locals hang out in the streets at night

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touch with a CVC shop and let an agent know what their family's city or village is, and the CVC staff will take care of the rest.

The CVC packages were launched after Patelli represented the company at a Lebanese diaspora meeting last May. The local government invited the tour operator to attend and to handle trips there from Brazil.

"We are very glad that the government of Lebanon came to us. They're our partners for this project," Patelli told ANBA.

While in Lebanon, the manager went to tourist spots and began to outline the travel plans. The work was complemented with the visit of a specialist who handled the technical aspects. Patelli pointed out that there are 12 million Lebanese descendants in Brazil, and that they're not very familiar with Lebanon. He also said the government is encouraging the diaspora to apply for citizenship.

Patelli said he marveled at Lebanon, which he described as modern and fascinating, adding that Beirut is beautiful. "The people are very much connected with our own [Brazilian] way of being, and the food is wonderful," said Patelli. According to him, Lebanon is defined by diversity and tolerance, with mosques standing next to cathedrals. He recalls that in Beirut, people hang out in the streets and enjoy life. "It's the Paris of the Middle East," he says.

The manager claims the tours in the packages are history-oriented, but not conventionally so, and that they include sites other than just museums. "The history of Lebanon is very rich, it's truly a beautiful country," he said. In Byblos, for instance, people can see an archaeological site, as well as go to a souk (a traditional market) and watch the sunset at a Roman Amphitheater. The fine landscapes are a plus, according to him.

Services to Brazilians are available for a minimum of two people. Several airlines are available, including ones from Europe, Africa and the Middle East. Travelers can choose the one that best suits their needs. They can choose to make a stopover in Europe.

A six-night, five-day trip covering six cities in March 2018 begins at BRL 2.612, payable in up to ten interest-free instalments. The package includes airport to hotel transfer, land transportation to all the cities covered, breakfast, and Portuguese-speaking guide service. Air tickets are not included.

Quick facts

Lebanon tour packages
CVC – at stores or online
<https://www.cvc.com.br/>

***Translated by Gabriel Pomeranblum**

<http://www.anba.com.br/>



The Jeita Grotto fascinates tourists

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Baalbek: attractions include historic sites

www.inovsi.com.br

