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Baghdad remains a vibrant and colorful city, despite the hardships of recent times. The locals have refused to give in to the conflicts and violence and do everything in their power to make sure their beloved city remains bustling with life, courage, personality and optimism. With all this in mind, risks and dangers remain ever-present, and leisure travel is highly advised against by most world governments for the time being.

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### **Monument to the Unknown Soldier**

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### **Swords of Qadissyah**

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### **Baghdadi Museum**

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### **Zawraa Park**

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## THE CITY

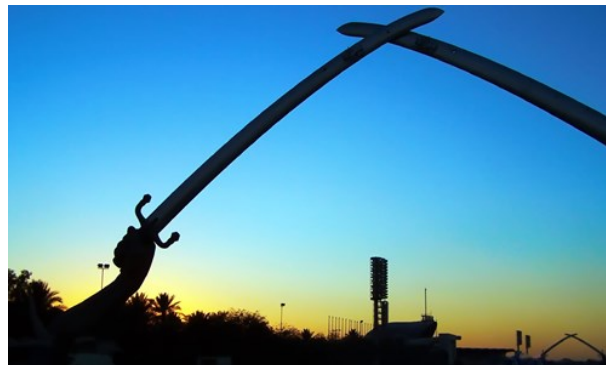


*thehunter1184/Flickr (image cropped)*

Baghdad's current state betrays its long and illustrious history. It was once a vital centre for scholarship and culture in the Arab world and an inviting destination for bohemians and backpackers from every corner of the world, invoking romantic images of Arabia. Today, sadly, after years of conflict, much of the city is in tatters, and constant dangers make it difficult for local residents, not to mention foreign travelers.

International visitors, mainly there for business purposes, are largely restricted to the International Zone, or Green Zone, where security is better. Venturing outside the Green Zone is often advised against, but that is where much of the city's and its population's vibrancy and flair can be found and enjoyed.

## DO & SEE



*Angela N Perryman/Shutterstock.com*

Though international visitors are advised to remain within the International Zone for security reasons, venturing outside its boundaries reveals more of what the city has to offer. Within and without, imposing monuments to wartime heroes and some fascinating museums make up some of the highlights, and parks provide some much needed green spaces for locals to rest.

### **Iraqi Museum**

The Iraqi Museum is dedicated to the history of Iraq and the peoples that have inhabited its territory throughout the centuries. The collections include Sumerian, Assyrian and Babylonian artefacts dated back as far as 7,000 years, although, unfortunately, many were lost during the looting that took place during the early days of the war in 2003.

Address: National Museum of Iraq, Baghdad

### **Monument to the Unknown Soldier**

Located in the Great Celebration square, this imposing monument represents a traditional Iraqi shield (called a dira'a) being dropped by the loosening hand of a dying soldier, and it is meant to commemorate all the men who fought and died for their country in the Iran-Iraq war.

Address: Baghdad Monument, Baghdad

### Swords of Qadissyah

The Swords of Qadissyah, also known as Victory Arch or Hands of Victory, is one of Baghdad's more bizarre monuments, consisting statues of two hands holding swords that join above the road. They mark the entrance to Great Celebrations square, which celebrates Iraq's victory in the Iran-Iraq war.

Address: Swords of Qadisiyah, Baghdad

Phone: +964 781 471 2915

### Baghdadi Museum

Described as the Iraqi "Madam Tussaud's", the Baghdadi Museum's wax sculptures eternalize not the modern-day movie stars but average Baghdadi residents going about their lives during mid-20th century. The museum is a family-friendly place to learn about local folklore and past lifestyles.

Address: Shuhada Bridge, Baghdad

Phone: +964 780 787 7085

### Zawraa Park

One of the biggest and well-known parks in Baghdad, Zawraa Park's territory used to be occupied by an army camp, but was later transformed into a family-friendly recreation area. Green spaces, playgrounds, shops, cafés and even the city zoo are all located inside.

Address: Zawraa Park, Baghdad

Opening hours: 9am-10pm

Phone: +964 780 824 4332

## DINING



Rus S/Shutterstock.com

Iraqi cuisine has roots that date back as far as 10,000 years, and through the centuries those roots have incorporated ingredients and techniques from nearby areas such as Persia, Syria and Turkey, resulting in a complex and varied cooking tradition. Be sure to try some of the typical dishes and snacks, such as falafel, dolma, biryani and pita with hummus.

### Saj Al-Reef Restaurant

Saj Al-Reef, as the name reflects, uses Saj (a bread-type dough placed on a domed metal griddle and baked over a wood fire) as a main ingredient in many of its dishes, being a healthier alternative to regular bread. Over time other influences have been adopted and the menu now includes Saj sandwiches, Mexican dishes, Indian and other ethnic foods.

Address: Al Wathiq Square, 62 St, Baghdad

Opening hours: Daily 7am-1am

Phone: +964 771 222 2860

Internet: [www.sajalreef.com](http://www.sajalreef.com)

### Restaurant Beeston Samad

Samad Restaurant is a local favourite, its throngs of loyal patrons flooding their four locations daily and warranting the opening of a new location in Dubai. The menu consists of oriental, Iraqi, Kurdish and Western cuisines. The prices might be higher than most other options in the

area, but they merely reflect the quality of the food.

Address: Al Mansur St, Baghdad  
Phone: +964 740 024 4666  
Internet: [www.samadrest.com](http://www.samadrest.com)  
Email: [info@bestoonsamadrestaurant.com](mailto:info@bestoonsamadrestaurant.com)

### **Aroma Restaurant**

Aroma Restaurant is well-known for its breakfast buffets, which have a wide selection of food, and its fantastic fruit juices, which should not be missed. Lunch and dinner options include Italian and Middle Eastern dishes, as well as prime steaks. The restaurant itself is classy and clean and the staff is professional.

Address: Al-Jadriyah, Baghdad  
Phone: +964 780 999 2999  
Email: [info@aromarest.com](mailto:info@aromarest.com)

### **Mazaya Restaurant**

Mazaya stands out for the huge diversity of its menu. Options include everything from European cuisine and classic Italian favourites like pizza and pasta to Chinese and Middle Eastern dishes, specializing in Iraqi and Lebanese food. Whatever mood you're in, you are sure to find something at Mazaya.

Address: Al Mansur St, Baghdad  
Opening hours: Daily 10:30am-11pm  
Phone: +964 781 522 2006

## **CAFES**



*AGCreations/Shutterstock.com*

From the modern and sleek Western-style cafes where young urbanites sip espressos, to more traditional Iraqi teahouses where older gentlemen share a hookah, to child-friendly ice cream parlours where families escape the afternoon heat and enjoy pistachio-packed cones, Baghdad's cafe scene has plenty to offer even the most discerning coffee-lover.

### **Ice Pack**

Few things can help cool weary travelers during the hot Iraqi afternoons quite like ice cream. Ice Pack is a popular ice cream parlour with locations all around the city. Locals love the rich and creamy texture, as well as the great variety of flavours from which to choose.

Address: Dhubat, Baghdad  
Phone: +964 770 152 6932

### **Al Faqma Ice Cream & Cake**

Al Faqma is a Baghdad institution. This much beloved family-run establishment has been in operation for over 40 years. Now with several locations throughout the city, it is a great place to try more traditional Iraqi ice cream, loaded with pistachio nuts.

Address: 14 Ramadhan Street, Baghdad  
Opening hours: Daily 10am-12:30am  
Phone: +964 770 299 9339

## BARS & NIGHTLIFE



ainudil (image cropped)

After years of violence and imposed curfews, Baghdad's once famous nightlife is slowly coming back to life. Throngs of young residents can be seen enjoying themselves at outdoor cafes and pool halls, drinking beer and playing dominoes until as late as midnight. Bars and restaurants and even a nightclub or two are once again filling the city's nights with merriment, but for foreign visitors, the best place to get a drink and enjoy the night is still at one of the international organisations or private clubs.

## SHOPPING



ainudil (image cropped)

Baghdad's historic shopping area stretches out from Shuhada Bridge to Ahrar Bridge, Rashid Street being a traveler's main landmark - most specialized shopping streets (souqs) are off the Rashid Street's either side. Some highlights of the busy shopping labyrinth include the deafening Coppersmith Souq, vibrant Shorjah

marketplace and colorful Clothiers and Rug Souqs. On the other side of Tigris, Mansour Mall offers a quieter, haggle-free shopping alternative.

### Souqs and Bazaars

Most of Baghdad's traditional marketplaces are to be found off Rashid Street, in the area between Shuhada and Ahrar Bridges. Stroll through the Coppersmith Souq to marvel at ornate copper pots of all shapes and sizes, and stop by the busy marketplace of Shorjah on the other side of Rashid Street to savor the air of a traditional Oriental bazaar.

Address: Rashid Street, Baghdad

### Mutanabbi Street

Hailed as the heart of Baghdad's intellectual life, Mutanabbi Street (named in honor of a celebrated 10th century Iraqi poet Al-Mutanabbi) has historically been home to multiple bookshops, outdoor book stalls and book vendors - many of these are still in operation today.

Address: Mutanabbi Street, Baghdad

### Mansour Mall

Mansour Mall is the first one of its kind in Iraq, and is easily comparable to its multiple shiny look-alikes all over the globe. Inside, shoppers will find international brand boutiques, a food court, a 5D cinema and children entertainment areas. Avoid rush hours to miss the crowds.

Address: Rowad Street, Baghdad

Phone: +964 781 330 8326

### Maximall

Maximall is something of a large department store chain, with several locations around the city. Selling primarily shoes and clothing by brands lesser-known internationally, the stores

are clean and staffed by helpful shop assistants. There is normally a food court in the top floor.

Address: Rowad Intersection, Baghdad  
Phone: +964 782 666 1492

## TOURIST INFORMATION



*Iulian Dragomir/Shutterstock.com*

### Baghdad International Airport



The Baghdad International Airport is located 16km away from downtown Baghdad. It is the country's largest air hub, and home base for

the national airline (Iraqi Airways). Connections are available to destinations worldwide.

Unless a private transfer has been pre-arranged, the only way of getting to the city/International Zone is by taxi (available at the airport).

Photo: Juan Garces  
Address: Baghdad, Iraq  
Internet: [www.baghdad-airport.com](http://www.baghdad-airport.com)

### Public Transport



Transportation within Baghdad is mostly pre-arranged; main means of transport for visitors include helicopters and armored

cars/buses.

There is a functioning metro in Baghdad and a public bus system (these are, however, unreliable and not recommended for use during short trips to the area).

Photo: Pierre-Luc Auclair

### Taxi



Individual travelers are advised to arrange transportation within Baghdad prior to arrival. Taxi services are available at the airport,

and shared taxis can be hired around the city. If you opt for using one of these options, agree on the price beforehand, even if there is a metre running.

Photo: ArrivalGuides

### Dangers



While in many respects the situation in Baghdad is steadily improving, the city's dangers should under no circumstances be underestimated.

Kidnappings and terrorist attacks (particularly car-bombs and improvised explosive devices) are real threats, and protesters have been met with deadly violence in the city squares and streets, as of the date of research. Marketplaces are often targeted and are thus especially

dangerous. For these reasons many governments warn their citizens to avoid all but essential travel to Baghdad. Every precaution should be taken to remain safe during your time in the city.

Photo: aalbedouin/Shutterstock.com

### Post Office

Baghdad Post Office



Photo: Andy Fuchs

Address: Nasir Street, Baghdad

Phone: +964 771 268 8837

### Pharmacy



Amna Al-Sheikhly Al Kindi  
St, Baghdad +964 771  
550 9697 Al Maraya  
Scientific Pharmacy Al  
Kindi St, Baghdad +964  
740 005 7441 Drug

Treasure Pharmacy  
+964 790 144 0534

Photo: Gemma Garner

Address: Al Kindi St, Baghdad

Phone: +964 771 550 9697

### Telephone

Iraq country code +964



Photo: Jardson Almeida

### Electricity

230 V, 50 Hz



Photo: Stirling Tschan

### Population

7,5 million (2022 estimate)

### Currency

Iraqi Dinar

1 IDQ = 1000 fils

### Opening hours

Businesses and shops are generally open Sat-Thu

8:30am-1pm and 5pm-7pm, but hours can vary a lot.

Restaurants stay open late, until about 11pm or midnight.

### Newspapers

Iraqi News

### Emergency numbers

122