



West Bank

الضفة الغربية

הגדה המערבית

Includes ➔

Bethlehem.....	253
Around Bethlehem..	260
Ramallah & Al-Bireh	262
Around Ramallah...	266
Jericho & Around...	266
Hebron.....	272
Nablus.....	274
Jenin.....	277

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ La Vie Cafe (p264)
- ➔ Afteem (p258)
- ➔ Al Essawe (p269)
- ➔ Al Aqsa (p277)
- ➔ Peace Center Restaurant (p258)

Best Historic Sites

- ➔ Mar Saba Monastery (p262)
- ➔ Hisham's Palace (p268)
- ➔ Sebastiya (p275)
- ➔ Nabi Musa (p268)

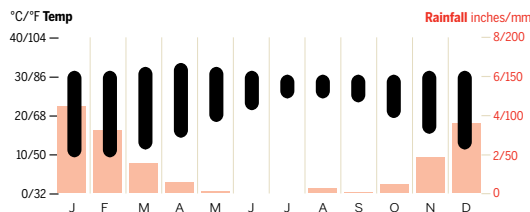
Why Go?

'Welcome' is a word you hear a lot in the West Bank. Whether it is shouted by a street trader in a bustling souk, expressed with a smile over a plate of felafel or roared from a taxi over booming Arabic music, Palestinians are forever wanting to make tourists feel appreciated.

Given the popular conception of the West Bank as a post-er child for strife and violence, this might surprise some visitors; and it is true that dirt-poor refugee camps, barbed-wire checkpoints and the towering separation wall are rarely far from the eye. But there is another Palestine too, one of bustling cities and chaotic souks, rolling hills and traditional villages, olive groves and chalky desert landscapes, where biblical sites abound.

But perhaps most appealing is the chance to meet Palestinians who remain hopeful of peace and stability even under untold pressures. The West Bank may not be the easiest place in which to travel – but the effort is richly rewarded.

When to Go Bethlehem



Oct There's a festive air as city dwellers return to their native villages for the olive harvest.

Nov A harvest festival is held at Burqi'in in early November.

Late Dec Bethlehem is electric, with lights, decorations, carolling and Christmas Eve Mass.



West Bank Highlights

- 1** Wandering the serene stone streets of **Bethlehem** (p253), from the Old City to Manger Sq and the Church of the Nativity.
- 2** Keeping cool over cocktails in one of **Ramallah's** (p262) trendy gathering spots.
- 3** Dangling aloft in a cable car above **Ancient Jericho**

- (p267), the sandy remains of the oldest continuously inhabited civilisation on earth.
- 4** Visiting the troubled city of **Hebron** (p272) and its contentious resting place of the monotheist patriarchs.
- 5** Coming clean at a soap factory and Turkish bath in **Nablus** (p274).

- 6** Meeting the inspiring actors at the world-renowned **Freedom Theatre** (p277) in Jenin.
- 7** Clambering up to the platform on **Mt Gerizim** (p276), believed by Samaritans to be God's first creation on Earth.