



 **Eco-Solidarity Journey
in Mesopotamia**

Discover the other Iraq

**TRAVEL WITH UN PONTE PER
AND LOCAL ACTIVISTS IN
SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL
IRAQ**

**Experience a unique journey
in the cradle of civilization**



**NEW TRAVEL DATES!
27 DEC - 5 JAN**



Why choose this tour?



Highlights

EXPLORE MESOPOTAMIA SUSTAINABLY

Experience the wonders of Mesopotamia in a sustainable, safe, and eco-friendly way. Witness the beauty of historical and religious sites that tell the story of human civilization while leaving a financial contribution for local development projects.

IMMERSE IN IRAQI CULTURE AND TRADITIONS

Stay in local guesthouses, enjoy authentic cuisine, and connect with local people, associations, and activists engaged in the promotion of human and environmental rights.

SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN IRAQ

Help promote a positive image of Iraq and contribute to the development of sustainable tourism, fostering cultural understanding and appreciation.

VISIT UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES

Explore several UNESCO World Heritage sites, including The Ahwar of Southern Iraq (the wetland Marsh area), Ur and Uruk's archaeological cities, and Babylon.

What we offer!

- **PERIOD: 27/12/2024 – 5/01/2025**
- **DURATION: 10 DAYS, 9 NIGHTS**
- **MEDIUM COMMITMENT**
- **LOCAL GUIDE IN ENGLISH**

- **SUSTAINABLE AND RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL**
- **CULTURAL, HISTORICAL, UNESCO HERITAGE SITES**
- **NATURALISTIC EXPLORATION**
- **MEETINGS WITH IRAQI CIVIL SOCIETY**
- **HOTELS - 3 AND 4 * CATEGORY STRUCTURES (LOCAL STANDARDS) AND OVERNIGHT STAY IN TRADITIONAL MUDIF**
- **SUSTAINABLE MEANS OF TRANSPORT WHEN POSSIBLE**
- **SAFE ITINERARY**



The experience



"This is a journey going beyond sightseeing, giving you the chance to experience in a completely sustainable way the warmth of Iraqi hospitality as well as to rediscover a country brimming with history, culture, natural and social beauty, moving around from Basra to the Marshlands, Nasiriya, Ur and Uruk, Najaf, Kufa, Karbala, Babylon and Baghdad".

Issam, activist and local tour guide.





*Eco-solidarity journey
in Mesopotamia*





DAY 1 A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME

The group will land in Basra and complete the visa procedures. After a late lunch in a traditional restaurant, we will take a relaxing sunset walk on the Corniche of the Shatt al-Arab, to admire the view and the statue of renowned Basri poet Badr Shakir al-Sayyab, followed by a boat trip at the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Seafood dinner and settling down.



DAY 2 UNVEILING BASRA'S HIDDEN GEMS

Exploration of Basra old town and souq, admiring the characteristic "Shanasheel" balconies, followed by a visit to Basra Museum. Afternoon meetings with the vibrant civil society of Basra: in a local NGO center we will chat with human rights and environmental justice activists. To cap the day off, we will take part in the music and theater activities of the Akitu Carnival, reviving the most ancient festival in human history.



DAY 3

DISCOVERING THE MARSHLANDS

Leaving Basra behind, our journey will cross the historic city of Al Qurnah, which enshrines the prophetic Tree of Knowledge. Our next stop will be the Mesopotamian Marshes, one of the largest wetland ecosystems on Earth. Hosted by a local family, we will explore the canals on small traditional boats, and sleep in a mudhif, the characteristic marshes dwelling built with reeds. This will be a unique chance to experience a day in the life of sacred but endangered ecosystems and communities.



DAY 4

FROM THE MARSHES TO NASIRIYAH

Our morning will start with a delicious breakfast in the mudhif and with further exploration of the marshes, where we will meet the Marsh Arabs, a local youth association committed to the protection of the marshes environment and support to the local community. In the afternoon, we will move to Nasiriyah, to visit its rich Archeological Museum and a local workshop reproducing ancient handicrafts, managed by the youth group "Sons of Ur".



DAY 5 SUMERIAN CIVILIZATION TOUR

This day will be entirely dedicated to the heart of ancient Mesopotamia. We will start exploring the archeological site of Ur, a major Sumerian city and birthplace of the Prophet Abraham, with its famous Great Ziggurat. After a delicious lunch break, we will move towards Uruk, one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world, and the place containing the first testament of cuneiform writing. After a full day of exploration, we will check into our hotel in Najaf, a holy city for Shia Muslims, and visit its magnificent Imam Ali Shrine.



DAY 6 KARBALA AND THE GREAT FORTRESS

After reaching the holy city of Karbala we will visit the mosques Imam Hussain Shrine and Imam Abbas Shrine in the morning, whereas in the afternoon we will explore the historic marvel of Al-Ukhaidir Fortress, an outstanding defensive construction of the Abbasid period. On the way to the fortress, we will stop by the archeological Caves of Al-Tar, whose graves might be hailing from the Roman/Parthian period. Finally, we will settle in for a relaxing evening in Karbala.



DAY 7 UNVEILING THE MARVELS OF BABYLON

We will explore the ancient city of Babylon and its surrounding wonders. The archeological site includes outer and inner-city walls, the famous Ishtar Gate, the labyrinthine maze of old Babylon, the statue of the Lion of Babylon associated to the Goddess Ishtar, palaces and temples that offer a unique testimony to the neo-Babylonian civilization, in particular its contribution to architecture and urban design. In the afternoon we will ascend a nearby hill to visit an abandoned palace built by Saddam Hussein and we will reach a local farm to spend the night there.



DAY 8 DISCOVERING BAGHDAD AND ITS MUSEUMS

In the morning we will move to the capital city of Baghdad, where a local guide will help you navigate the vast collection of the Iraqi National Museum to learn more about the wonders of Iraqi history and civilization. Then, we will visit the Al-Mustansiriya Madrasa, an historic Islamic University dating back to the Abbasid era representing Baghdad's golden age of learning. This same day we will have the chance to walk through Al-Mutanabbi Street, a symbol of intellectual freedom attracting writers, artists and dissenting voices from across the country. In this same area of the city we will visit the recently restructured Abbasid Palace, one of the most important heritage sites in Baghdad, located to the left bank of the Tigris River. A part of the day will be dedicated to free time for shopping and to enjoying the atmosphere of one of the oldest and most famous coffeehouses in Baghdad called Shabandar Café.



DAY 9 RECOLLECTING MOMENTS OF IRAQI PEOPLE'S RESILIENCE

In the morning, we will head to Al-Tahrir Square, the heart of Baghdad, around which the recent youth-led revolution developed and where you will see the famous Freedom monument commemorating the 1958 establishment of the Republic of Iraq. We will continue our recollection of some of the moments that marked Iraq's history by visiting the Iraqi Martyr Monument in memory of the Iran-Iraq War. Finally, in the afternoon we will head to Al-Zawra Park, a large public space in the heart of Baghdad where you can meet the local youth building the first skate-park in central Iraq. During the day we will meet activists of the Iraqi Social Forum exposing their work on human rights, freedom of expression, social justice.



DAY 10 FROM ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA TO THE ANTI-COLONIAL REVOLT

During this last day we will move near the borders of Baghdad to visit the ancient Mesopotamian site of Aqar Quf, consisting of the remains of the Kassite city Dūr-Kurigalzu founded as a royal residence and composed of the ziggurat, temples dedicated to Mesopotamian gods and a royal palace. We will then move to the historical museum of Khan Dhari which recollects the 20th century's revolution against the British colonization, with the pictures and documents produced by the leaders of the anti-colonial revolt. In the late afternoon we will head back to central Baghdad and prepare for your departure from Baghdad Airport.

Contact us

Ask for more information on logistics, safety and cost of the trip to Issam (guide, interpreter and activist from Nasiriya) and Aurora (board member of UPP from Italy) who will guide you through this experience.

Contact:



travels@unponteper.it

Hurry up, places are limited!

Another Iraq is possible!

