

Today the Ramallah and Al-Bireh Governorate's population of 350,000 make Ramallah the fourth largest city and the de-facto capital of the West Bank. Ramallah can be seen as a small town with 'big city' features: a bustling cultural scene, trendy restaurants and vibrant nightlife provide a unique view of what Palestinian life is like under continued occupation by Israel. Ramallah is a place not to be missed.

Ramallah's character changed with the creation of Israel, and the influx of Palestinian refugees in 1948. Refugees walked all the way from Lod and Ramle in Israel, and other cities in historic Palestine, and there remain several large refugee camps around the city. Summer treats have mostly been replaced with high-rise residential blocks and governmental institutions, as the Palestinian Authority as well as international NGOs have made Ramallah their base.

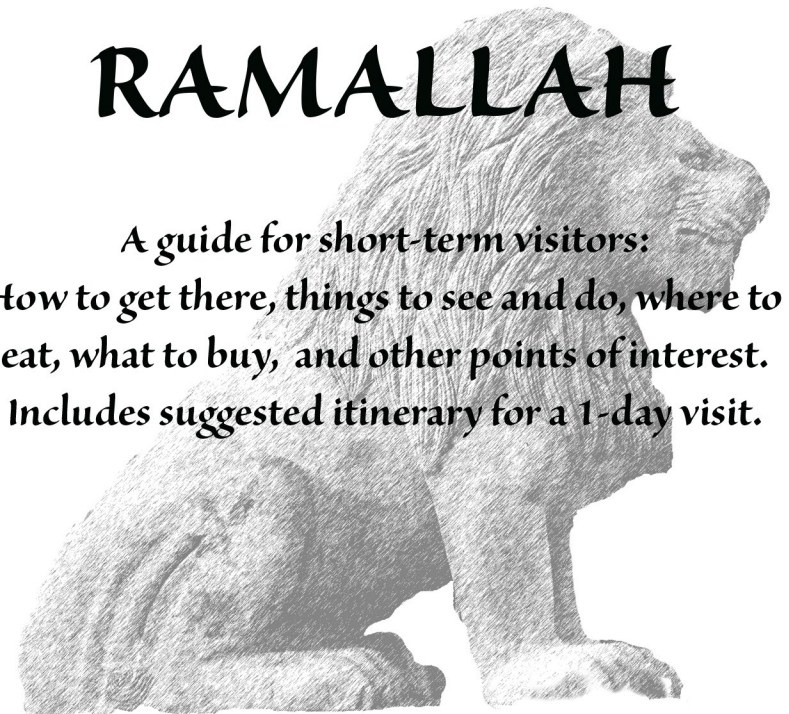
Ramallah used to be a small Christian town that people from across the Middle East visited in summer. The city lies in the hills (on average 880m above sea level) 15km north of Jerusalem and enjoys a pleasant Mediterranean climate. From the older buildings that remain today, it is possible to recognise that Ramallah was not meant to be one of the West Bank's main cities, but used to be a quaint town consisting of summer houses on big blocks of land. This explains in part the relatively small 'old town' and the absence of a large souq, unlike the commercial hubs of Hebron and Nablus in the West Bank.

## Introducing Ramallah

**That's Ramallah Baby's** *Free Copy*

# MAP OF RAMALLAH

**A guide for short-term visitors:  
How to get there, things to see and do, where to eat, what to buy, and other points of interest.  
Includes suggested itinerary for a 1-day visit.**



## Why visit Ramallah?

Ramallah is known to some as a cosmopolitan, liberal city, a 'cool' place that has much more to offer than East Jerusalem or any other city in the West Bank in terms of cultural activities, restaurants and nightlife. Others observe that to visit Ramallah is to visit a 'bubble', where the '5-star occupation' enables residents and visitors alike to escape the confines of the occupation more than other cities in the West Bank.

These views highlight that Ramallah is a city full of contradictions, and visitors are confronted with a myriad of impressions about Palestinian life. Despite the cosmopolitan feel to the city, it remains under occupation by Israel, and the struggle for independence, poverty and restrictions on individual freedom can be felt on the streets, even if you need to look beyond expensive cars, up-market restaurants and security forces.

**More information and reviews, as well as a downloadable map:**

**Ramallah municipality, including a map with more listings:**

<http://www.ramallah-ps/english.aspx>

**Event and other listings:** [www.thisweekinpalestine.com](http://www.thisweekinpalestine.com)

**More recommended places in** [www.openstreetmap.org](http://www.openstreetmap.org)

**There is free wifi in most places.**

## About this map

This map aims to maximise the experience of visiting Ramallah by providing short term visitors with specific suggestions based on local knowledge and research.

**That's Ramallah Baby** started out as a website to record and share a London city girl's experiences while living in Ramallah. I have found that the web and other information sources do not adequately cater to short term visitors and as such have developed this map.

The recommendations are based on personal experiences and local recommendations, and no recommendations are based on commercial relationships. I simply want visitors to get the most out of their experience here.

For more information about Ramallah, and for information on other day trips in Palestine, please visit

[www.thatramallahbaby.com](http://www.thatramallahbaby.com)

## Must see

### Arafat's Mausoleum:

Keeping the following facts in mind when visiting the Mausoleum will enhance the experience:

1. The number of metres leading up to the tomb count 75 - one for each year of Arafat's life.
2. The structure in which his tomb lies is a cube of 11m x 11m, representing the date on which he died, 11th November 2004.
3. Swiss investigators opened the tomb in 2012 to undertake further tests to determine the reason for his death (apparently he was poisoned).
4. There is also a poignant reminder of Israel's illegal settlements, which you can see on top of the hill when looking right (you are in the mausoleum facing the tomb).
5. The water surrounding the tomb signifies that it is like a ship moving for wards, towards Jerusalem, which is where Arafat hoped to be buried at some point. As such, the current complex is seen as only temporary.
6. In fact, the entire complex faces Jerusalem, and at night a laser shines a blue light from the minaret towards Jerusalem.
7. The three flags signify the number of funerals that Arafat has had so far - in France, Egypt and Palestine.
8. Some arrangements of trees and shrubs on the complex also signify important dates. For example, the 5th March 2002, the day that Arafat's compound was put under siege during the second intifada.
9. Each stone pillar on the site represents a Palestinian village between the Arafat's tomb and Jerusalem.

## Getting to Ramallah

It is not as hard as people may think to get to Ramallah, and it is definitely worth a day trip. In most cases it is straight-forward, and understanding the process and the different options, and keeping an open mind, will make the trip in the more exceptional circumstances less daunting. Remember that it is all part of the experience and don't forget to bring your passport and visa. Palestinians are also more than happy to help if you ask them, many of them speak English well.

### From Jerusalem to Ramallah

Public transport is simple and straightforward unless in exceptional circumstances. Head to the bus station at Damascus Gate and take Bus 219 to Ramallah (8NIS). It runs frequently and takes around 45 minutes, depending on traffic. The bus passes through the Qalandia checkpoint, in most cases without stopping. A Taxi from Damascus Gate is also an option (~300NIS).

### From Ramallah to Jerusalem

From the Ramallah Bus Station, take Bus 219 to Jerusalem. The last bus leaves around 9.45pm but make sure to check this when you arrive as this can change on the day. The bus passes again through the Qalandia Checkpoint. Foreigners, children and the elderly can stay on the bus while passing through the checkpoint, and Israeli soldiers will check your ID and visa on the bus. Palestinians need to disembark and get their IDs checked. In some cases the entire bus may be asked to disembark and to walk through the checkpoint. If you would rather not do this (it can take a long time), there is always an option to catch a taxi, private car or white minibus with yellow number plates from Qalandia to Jerusalem (NIS10). Here you may pass through a different checkpoint (Hizma) in most cases without being stopped. Sometimes it may be necessary to change buses at Qalandia once you have passed through the Israeli checkpoint, but this will be simple and there is always someone who can speak enough English to get you back to Jerusalem.

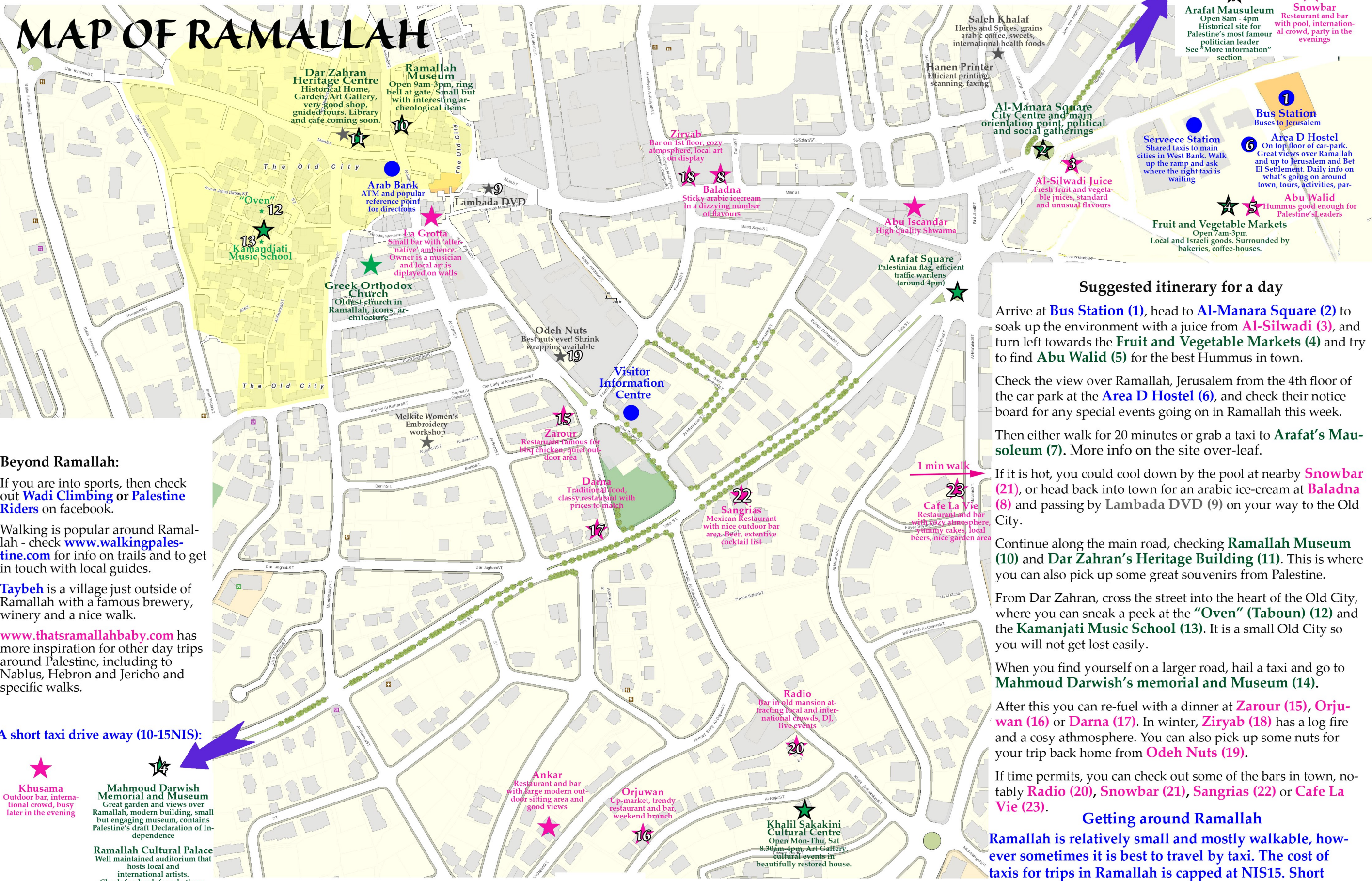
**Remember: the West Bank is under military occupation by Israel**

LEGEND

- ★ Things to see and do
- ★ Restaurant / Cafe / Bar
- Other point of interest
- ★ Shopping

A short taxi drive away: (10-15NIS)

# MAP OF RAMALLAH



### Suggested itinerary for a day

Arrive at **Bus Station (1)**, head to **Al-Manara Square (2)** to soak up the environment with a juice from **Al-Silwadi (3)**, and turn left towards the **Fruit and Vegetable Markets (4)** and try to find **Abu Walid (5)** for the best Hummus in town.

Check the view over Ramallah, Jerusalem from the 4th floor of the car park at the **Area D Hostel (6)**, and check their notice board for any special events going on in Ramallah this week.

Then either walk for 20 minutes or grab a taxi to **Arafat's Mausoleum (7)**. More info on the site over-leaf.

If it is hot, you could cool down by the pool at nearby **Snowbar (21)**, or head back into town for an arabic ice-cream at **Baladna (8)** and passing by **Lambada DVD (9)** on your way to the Old City.

Continue along the main road, checking **Ramallah Museum (10)** and **Dar Zahran's Heritage Building (11)**. This is where you can also pick up some great souvenirs from Palestine.

From Dar Zahran, cross the street into the heart of the Old City, where you can sneak a peek at the **"Oven" (Taboun) (12)** and the **Kamanjati Music School (13)**. It is a small Old City so you will not get lost easily.

When you find yourself on a larger road, hail a taxi and go to **Mahmoud Darwish's memorial and Museum (14)**.

After this you can re-fuel with a dinner at **Zarour (15)**, **Orjuwan (16)** or **Darna (17)**. In winter, **Ziryab (18)** has a log fire and a cosy atmosphere. You can also pick up some nuts for your trip back home from **Odeh Nuts (19)**.

If time permits, you can check out some of the bars in town, notably **Radio (20)**, **Snowbar (21)**, **Sangrias (22)** or **Cafe La Vie (23)**.

### Getting around Ramallah

Ramallah is relatively small and mostly walkable, however sometimes it is best to travel by taxi. The cost of taxis for trips in Ramallah is capped at NIS15. Short rides should only cost NIS10.

### Beyond Ramallah:

If you are into sports, then check out **Wadi Climbing** or **Palestine Riders** on facebook.

Walking is popular around Ramallah - check [www.walkingpalestine.com](http://www.walkingpalestine.com) for info on trails and to get in touch with local guides.

**Taybeh** is a village just outside of Ramallah with a famous brewery, winery and a nice walk.

[www.thatramallahbaby.com](http://www.thatramallahbaby.com) has more inspiration for other day trips around Palestine, including to Nablus, Hebron and Jericho and specific walks.

### A short taxi drive away (10-15NIS):

- ★ **Khusama**  
Outdoor bar, international crowd, busy later in the evening
- ★ **Mahmoud Darwish Memorial and Museum**  
Great garden and views over Ramallah, modern building, small but engaging museum, contains Palestine's draft Declaration of Independence
- ★ **Ramallah Cultural Palace**  
Well maintained auditorium that hosts local and international artists. Check facebook for what's on.