

Guide to Libya

General Facts

Location: Northern Africa, bordering the Mediterranean Sea, between Egypt and Tunisia

Capital: Tripoli

Climate: Mediterranean along coast; dry, extreme desert interior

Population: 6+ million (2019 est.)

Ethnic Make-up: Berber and Arab 97%, other 3% (includes Greeks, Maltese, Italians, Egyptians, Pakistanis, Turks, Indians, and Tunisians)

Religions: Muslim 97%, other 3%

The main language spoken in Libya is Arabic, which is also the official language.



Libya, officially the State of Libya, is a country in the Maghreb region in North Africa. It is bordered by the Mediterranean Sea to the north, Egypt to the east, Sudan to the southeast, Chad to the south, Niger to the southwest, Algeria to the west, and Tunisia to the northwest.

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Dress

Women in Libya dress modestly and most of them wear the Hijab. The traditional dress is now limited to special occasions.

Local Currency

Libyan Dinar.

Foreign currency which consists of \$, £ or EURO can be changed in the country.

Climate

Libya's climate is dominated by the hot arid Sahara, but it is moderated along the coastal littoral by the Mediterranean Sea. Along the coast, the Mediterranean climate is characterized by a cool rainy winter season and a hot dry summer.

Dialling Codes

Dialling code: +218

Business Hours

Sunday to Thursday 0700-1400 (summer) and 0800-1600 (winter). Many businesses close on Fridays. Private businesses and shops operate differently and are usually open into the evening for shopping. During Ramadan, working hours are different and businesses are usually opened after sunset.

Food and Drink

Alcohol is banned in Libya.

Avoid drinking tap water in Libya and drink bottled water ensuring the seal has not been broken.

Libyan cuisine is a mixture of Arabic and Mediterranean with a strong Italian influence.

Tipping

Tips for services and service providers such as waiters, taxi, hotel staff are given. A tip of between 10-20% is usually included in restaurant bills.

Electrical Equipment

For Libya there are two associated plug types, types C and L. Plug type C is the plug which has two round pins and plug type L is the plug which has three round pins. Libya operates on a 230V supply voltage and 50Hz.

Libyan Business Etiquette

Business Meeting Arrangements:

You need to make appointments as far in advance as possible. Also confirm the appointment a day or two before the meeting. It is best to avoid scheduling the meeting during Ramadan if possible. Do not schedule meetings on Friday between 11:15 a.m. and 3 p.m. since most companies close for prayers. Arrive at meetings on time and be prepared to wait.

Libyan business people who are accustomed to dealing with international companies arrive on time, although it is often difficult for them to do so in such a relationship driven culture.

Libyans will allow others to join the meeting and so you may experience interruptions.

Check which language your meeting will be conducted in, so you know if you should hire an interpreter.

Business Negotiations

Libyans are looking for long-term business relationships.

The highest ranking person makes decisions, but only after obtaining group consensus.

Decisions are made slowly. Do not try to rush the process, as it would be interpreted as an insult.

Most decisions may require several layers of approval.

Greetings:

When you greet the handshake is commonly used and shake hands at the beginning and end of meetings. Men shake hands. A man must wait for a woman to extend her hand first.

Handshakes can be long affairs and extended

The most common greeting is "Aalaamu alaikum" ("Peace be with you") to which one would respond with "wa alaikum salam" ("and Peace be with you").

Smiling and direct eye contact is important although the eye contact should be intermittent rather than constant.

Titles:

Titles are very important (Mr. and Mrs.). Government officials are referred to as 'Your Excellency'. DO NOT use first names unless invited to do so. Business cards may be given and it is suggested to have one side translated into Arabic.

Business Communications:

Meeting people and building the relationships which lead to trade and investment opportunities is a vital part of all business development, but perhaps nowhere more so than in Libya.

Libyans will do business with people they know and trust. Those who are new to the market or unknown to the Libyan decision maker will start behind their more well-established competitors.

The LBBC's key role is to help our members initiate and develop high-value relationships with the individuals and organisations they need to know in order to win business in Libya.

Gifts:

In Libya, when someone is visiting a house for the first time, it is a tradition to bring a gift for the host family - something sweet such as pastries, fruit or a small gift from your home country.

For families with little children, toys or chocolate for them would be highly appreciated.

Gifts are generally not opened when received.

Libya – Travel in country information

Travel Agent

FCM TRAVEL

Ewropa Business Centre
Dun Karm Street
Birkirkara Bypass
Birkirkara BKR 9034
Malta
www.fcmtravel.com
www.fcm.com.mt

Meet and Greet arrangements

This is arranged through FCM Travel and can be arranged from the airport to the hotel and return or throughout the visit if required.

Local Travel (taxi)

It is advised to arrange for a driver via the hotel.

Driving in Country

It is a legal requirement for visitors to have a valid International Driving Permit (IDP) in order to rent a car and legally drive in Libya. All visitors who plan to drive in Libya must make sure they obtain an IDP in their home country or country of residence before they travel.

Libya drives on the right hand side of the road and officially you need an international driving licence plus your own licence to drive here. Libya has around 83,000km of highways, half of which are paved with a number of multi-lane expressways.

Accommodation

Corinthia Hotel

Al Kurnish Rd, Tripoli, Libya • +218 21-3351990

Radisson Blu

Al Fatah St, The Corniche, Tripoli, Libya • +218 21-3407878

4 Points by Sheraton

Phone: +218 21-3372300

Travel

Several Local Airlines including Libyan Airlines / Libyan Wings / Afriqiyah Airlines / Buraq Airlines / Tunis Air.

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance may be unable to offer travel cover for visits to Libya as the UK FCDO has advised against all travel to the country. Certain travel insurance companies can provide cover. More information to follow shortly.

Security

The LBBC have a number of members in the Security Risk Advisory sector who will be able to advise regarding security arrangements. [Click here to view the company details here](#)

Recommended Hospital / Clinics

FCM Travel work closely with St James Hospital and can provide medical attention together with medical evacuation accordingly – see FCM Medical Emergency pdf document.

FCM also works and has a relationship with International SOS if required.

Medical Requirements including vaccinations

Recommended Travel Vaccinations for Libya

VACCINE	HOW DISEASE SPREADS	DETAILS
Hepatitis A	Food & Water	Recommended for most travellers.
Hepatitis B	Blood & Body Fluids	Accelerated schedule available.
Typhoid	Food & Water	Shot lasts 2 years. Oral vaccine lasts 5 years, must be able to swallow pills. Oral doses must be kept in refrigerator.
Yellow Fever	Mosquito	Required if traveling from a country with risk of yellow fever transmission.
Rabies	Saliva of Infected Animals	High risk country. Vaccine recommended for long-term travellers and those who may come in contact with animals.
Polio	Food & Water	Required if arriving from a polio-endemic country or if you have spent 4 weeks in Afghanistan or Pakistan in the last 12 months. Considered a routine vaccination for most travel itineraries. Single adult booster recommended.

Routine Vaccinations for Libya

VACCINE	HOW DISEASE SPREADS	DETAILS
Measles Mumps Rubella (MMR)	Various Vectors	Given to anyone unvaccinated and/or born after 1957. One-time adult booster recommended.
TDAP (Tetanus, Diphtheria & Pertussis)	Wounds & Airborne	Only one adult booster of pertussis required.
Chickenpox	Direct Contact & Airborne	Given to those unvaccinated that did not have chickenpox.
Shingles	Direct Contact	Vaccine can still be given if you have had shingles.
Pneumonia	Airborne	Two vaccines given separately. All 65+ or immunocompromised should receive both.
Influenza	Airborne	Vaccine components change annually.
Meningitis	Airborne & Direct Contact	Required for entry to the country.

See latest COVID travel requirements

Disclaimer

The information in this document is intended to provide users with general information on matters that they may find of interest. The information contained and accessed on this site is provided by the LBBC for general guidance and has been drawn from several published sources. It is not intended to replace professional advice or consultative services and the LBBC assumes no responsibility for any errors or omissions in its content