

TEL AVIV-YAFO RAMALLAH / GERUSALEM

AN ISRAELIAN POPULAR SAID SAYS: "JERUSALEM PRAYS AND TEL AVIV HAS FUN". NOTHING TRUE, SINCE THE ISRAELI METROPOLIS IS THE LIVEST CENTER IN THE WHOLE COUNTRY. LOSING AMONG THE STRIPED ALLEYS OF BAUHAUS STYLE WHITE HOUSES IS AN EXPERIENCE WORTH DOING AND ALLOWS YOU TO UNDERSTAND WHY THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE BUILDINGS HAS MADE THEM EARN THE WHITE CITY APPEAL.

It is an Israeli city located on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. Tel Aviv is also the center of the largest and most populous metropolitan area in Israel, referred to as Gush Dan (Block of Dan). It is the main economic center of Israel.

It was the capital of Israel from 1948 to December 1949 and is still home to most foreign embassies in that state, as Israel's proclamation of Jerusalem as its capital is not recognized by several resolutions of the Security Council of Nations. United and a limited number of states have embassies in that city. However, the UN maps do not indicate any capital of Israel, therefore not even Tel Aviv.

Founded in 1909 by a group of residents of the nearby city of Jaffa [8], led by the future mayor Meir Dizengoff, the name of the city refers to a passage from the Bible: in the Book of Ezekiel, in fact, the "spring hill" is precisely the place where - in the vision of the prophet - the Jews in exile find a home.

Sixty families celebrated the founding act of the new city: they gathered on the beach and drew lots for the plot of land that belonged to each. Today these houses survive protected at the foot of the skyscrapers, or even embedded in the modern urban structure [9]. In building the city, the builders were inspired by the ideal of the "garden city", later reinterpreted by the Bauhaus current (so much so that in 2004 Tel Aviv was recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site).

Tel Aviv tends to be considered the country's main liberal and secular stronghold. The city is considered to be one of the most gay-friendly in the world and is home to Asia's busiest and most popular gay pride.

From a religious point of view, the secular component represents the majority of the population, constituting 57.5% in 2006 (compared to a national average of just over 40%), followed by 36.4% of traditionalists (26 , 4% of whom defined as

non-religious) and by 5.3% religious. The ultra-Orthodox represented less than 1% of the inhabitants.

Jaffa is home to a large part of the city's Arab minority, made up of Christians and Muslims.

Not everyone knows that Tel Aviv is a perfect city to be explored by bicycle, a means of transport much loved by the inhabitants. There are numerous cycle paths, which allow you to visit the city without problems. Thus, you can start by cycling south along the seafront (Herbert Samuel Blvd) which connects the city's public beaches with old Jaffa. Along the Rothschild Blv cycle path, on the other hand, you arrive inside the heart of the White City, where you can enjoy the view of the splendid buildings. Continuing along a cycle path that crosses the south coast of the Yarkon River, you reach the port.

Tel Aviv is a city full of events and festivals all year round. One of the most important citizen events is the International Tiberias Marathon, which attracts thousands of participants and supporters both from the country and from all over the world. The marathon route is particularly rich in attractions, as it winds through the historic districts of the Jordan Valley. Another fixture is the Khutzot Hayotzer Arts and Crafts Fair, held in Tel Aviv in July. The event dedicated to traditional and hyper-modern airplanes is set up near the Sultan's pisca, just outside the city walls. In August, on the other hand, Jaffa Nights in Tel Aviv offers tourists the possibility of a full immersion in Israeli cultural traditions: from music to dance, passing through the theater. The event lasts four days and the program is always very rich and varied. Finally, do not miss the IsraWinExpo, held in October and dedicated to wine.

Ramallah

Ramallah (Arabic: رام الله, Rām Allāh, which means "Mountain of God" or, more properly, "House of God", in Hebrew רמאללה) is a Palestinian city of about 27,092 inhabitants, located in the center of the West Bank on the mountains of Judea about 18 km north of Jerusalem. It is de facto the capital of the State of Palestine.

The Palestinian Arabs consider al-Quds (lit. "the Holy", ie Jerusalem) as their capital. Nonetheless, the continuing situation of precariousness and conflict with the State of Israel, together with the substantial absence of a real Palestinian

state, has made Ramallah the tacitly provisional capital of the Palestinian administration.

The Palestinian Parliament, several Ministries, foreign diplomatic representations (mainly in the form of consulates), as well as the so-called Muqāṭaʿa (Arabic: المقاطعة, al-Muqāṭaʿa, "the Separate") are located in Rāmallāh which houses, among other things, the headquarters of the Palestinian National Authority, the main office of President Mahmūd Abbās and the mausoleum that houses the body of the former Palestinian leader Yāsser ʿArafāt, officially inaugurated on November 10, 2007, on the eve of the third anniversary of his death.

The Paris of the West Bank. Prior to the outbreak of the First Intifada, Ramallah was considered the "Paris of the West Bank", because it was full of restaurants, cafes and clubs, which made the evening and nightlife particularly lively. It is a city that tends to be open to cultures different from the Islamic one, thanks also to the significant presence of Christian Arabs: in many restaurants in Rāmallāh you can order wine, which is impossible in other areas of the West Bank itself, such as Hebron, or in the Gaza Strip. where the influence of Islam, which prohibits alcohol, is more radical. In Hebron there are no cinemas, prohibited by the most intransigent Islam, while Rāmallāh has cinemas in which, in addition to the normal films of the Arab and international circuit, there are also festivals and so-called arthouse projections. It is also not impossible to come across fashion shows or Hip Hop concerts.

Ramallah, the heart and soul of Palestine, seat of the Palestinian Authority, Parliament and ministries, is also this: streets crowded with Korean cars, nightlife, elegant restaurants, parties, concerts and cultural events. Its modernity and its peaceful coexistence for the moment seem able to keep away, at least here, the specter of a bloody and still alive conflict (see the Gaza Strip, ed) that for more than half a century has opposed Israel and the Territories Palestinians.

West Bank, or Judea and Samaria, or West Bank, "western bank" of the Jordan River. Palestine archipelago, or even territories occupied, "partially" by Israel, or Israeli territories under Palestinian administration. It will always depend on which side this story is read and told. The fact is that the one between Israelis and Palestinians is a never-ending story. A twisted tangle of hatreds, wrongs, reasons, claims and revenge. Which over time have only widened the rift and made walls grow, widen the ditches, and wars explode.

And then there is the wall that makes life complicated, difficult. Even painful, when to move from one point to another, even if only to be admitted to a hospital, one must have an Israeli permit in hand to cross areas that are forbidden to Palestinians. And it does not mean that he will always be released. "In the West Bank, only 6 percent of the checkpoints that the Israelis have set up to defend themselves against us, separate the Israelis from the Palestinians - explains the director -, because the remaining 94 percent, in fact, divide Palestinians from Palestinians".

The West Bank, under the 1993 Oslo peace accords, is highlighted in three bodies "A", "B" and "C". Sector "A", mostly represented by the Palestinian cities of Ramallah, Nablus, Tubas, Jericho, Hebron (except the old city), Tulkarem, Qalqilya, Jenin, is under the administration and security of the Palestinian Authority. In "B" the civil administration is still Palestinian, but control and security are Israeli. The "C", on the other hand, is under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Israeli army.

The fact is that most of the territory of the West Bank is located in sector "C" and this aspect makes sectors "A" and "B" of the islands without any direct contact bridges between them, but only settlements of Israeli settlers which act as a bearing.

About three million Palestinians live in the 5,600 square kilometers of the West Bank: Sectors "A" and "B", 40 percent of the West Bank, are home to 80 percent of the Palestinian population; in the remaining 60%, in the "C" area, (about 300 thousand Palestinians), rich in natural, mineral and agricultural resources and then a valuable tourist resource due to the Dead Sea, twenty years ago there were 100 thousand Israeli settlers, today they exceed half a million and continue to increase.

Palestinian Ambassador Amal Jadau, head of the Europe Department for the Foreign Ministry of Palestine explains: "Living under occupation is becoming more and more difficult for us Palestinians. Since US President Donald Trump is in the White House, Israeli settler settlements have quadrupled. Trump has also decided to cut American funding to the United Nations Relief and Employment Agency (UNRWA), 40 percent of all international donors. They were fundamental resources for 5 million Palestinian refugees who feed, study and can be treated only thanks to the humanitarian projects of UNRWA".

Gerusalem

Both Israelis and Palestinian Arabs claim Jerusalem as the capital of their state. The last negotiations that came close to peace, in 2000, failed because no one had found a satisfactory way to divide the city. The international community has always tried to remain equidistant between Israeli and Palestinian demands - no country in the world has its own Israeli embassy in Jerusalem - and that is why Trump's decision is an unprecedented legitimacy for Israel's claims. .

In theory, the city is cut in half by the line drawn after the armistice of 1948, at the end of the first war between Palestinian Arabs and Israelis. The territories to the east of the line belong to the Palestinians, those to the west to the Israelis. In practice, however, Israel manages a much larger share than it would be and militarily occupies a large part of East Jerusalem. It has been doing this since 1967, the year in which it won the Six Day War, conquering practically all of today's West Bank (later partially ceded to the Palestinians with the Oslo accords of 1993).

The occupation of Israel created a kind of limbo for the people who lived in East Jerusalem and the Old City neighborhood.

East Jerusalem is separated from the rest of the West Bank by a wall built by the Israelis to protect their settlements. Its inhabitants are not Israeli citizens, but they have a right of permanent residence: this situation allows them to have an easier life than Palestinians living in the West Bank - they have greater freedom of movement and can use the same services as Israelis - but many they often say they are treated as second-rate citizens. West Jerusalem has spacious streets, ultramodern trams and several parks. Among other things, it is the seat of the main Israeli institutions such as the Knesset, ie the parliament, and the various ministries.

The only thing that makes it different from Mediterranean metropolises such as Madrid or Athens is the presence of many communities of ultra-Orthodox Jews, which are seen almost everywhere: men and children dress in black suits over white shirts, even if it does not exist. a single tradition to follow. Married women veil their heads and wear very long dresses. Many of them live in the neighborhood of Mea Shearim, northwest of the old city, where tourists are advised to dress modestly and not to take photographs on Saturday, the holy day for Jews, when throughout the very few people go around cities and only essential services are guaranteed.

