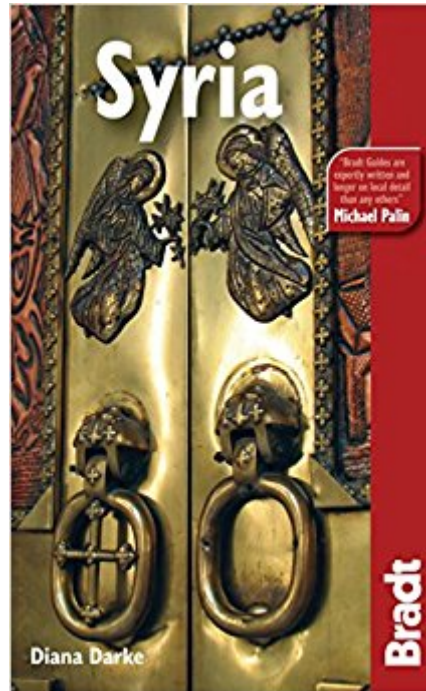




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Syria (Bradt Travel Guide Syria)



Synopsis

This second edition of Bradt's Syria is the clear market frontrunner, offering more detailed first-hand information on sites, cultural, historical and social background, accommodation and restaurants than any other guidebook. In addition to the country's impressive historical sites, such as the Roman caravan city of Palmyra and the Crusader castle of Crac des Chevaliers, it incorporates walking and trekking areas, wildlife and other environmental issues, while amusing snippets from literature, local anecdotes and sayings help to stimulate a genuine interest and understanding of Syria's people and the land in which they live.

Book Information

Series: Bradt Travel Guide Syria

Paperback: 336 pages

Publisher: Bradt Travel Guides; Second Edition edition (June 15, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1841623148

ISBN-13: 978-1841623146

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.8 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.1 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.4 out of 5 stars 5 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,482,787 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #23 in Books > Travel > Middle East > Syria #478 in Books > Travel > Middle East > General

Customer Reviews

'A useful resource.' Voyager 'A good general guide.' The Guardian

Prepare to be enchanted. Wild, sun-scorched deserts meet fragrant fruit orchards, and unspoilt Mediterranean beaches are backed by cool, forested hillsides. Lose yourself in the maze-like souks of Aleppo, discover ancient ruins or take in the serenity of the Great Umayyad Mosque. Syria is a land of magic and poetry. Diana Darke leads you authoritatively through Syria's history and culture, as well as providing all the practical essentials for a visit to this astonishing country--from restaurants and hotels to health and safety. *Crusader castles and classical ruins--including Palmyra *The timeless capital, Damascus *Waterwheels, palaces, and richly colored mosaics *The haunting Cities of the Dead *Detailed itineraries--where to go and what to see *Essential Arabic --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I liked this book because it actually makes reference into how divided the so called Arab People are in Syria in different religious groups, such as three quarters of all Arabs in Syria being Sunni Muslims.

Good book Helped in my travel

I just returned from two weeks in Syria with a friend who had brought Darke's guidebook with her, and we found it extremely useful. We had no trouble finding the sites and amenities she describes, and her accounts of sites outside Damascus are thorough and well-informed. She has done her homework on the history and archaeology, and the book contains dozens of helpful vignettes about daily life, customs, dress, language, religious practice, etc. that illuminated what we were seeing. The book is well-written and we enjoyed the incisive and occasionally tart asides. We were mid-level tourists, not budget, and it may be that the guide is better suited to the former. For the first-time traveler, it offered just the quantity and quality of information that were needed.

As someone living in Syria for over a year, I cannot recommend this guidebook, except for someone on a package tour, using the guide only for information on tourist sites. For independent, and particularly budget travelers, the guidebook is simply too unclear. The maps are extremely simplified, which is a serious problem in the winding alleyways of the old city of Damascus, and I find it hard to follow her directions to various restaurants having lived in the country for some time. As a visitor, I think it would be nearly impossible. The restaurant and hotel reviews are generally incredibly simplistic. For restaurants, half of each review discusses whether or not alcohol is served, while frequently ignoring both price and food quality. Hotels are described with similar brevity, and the focus is clearly on the upper end. The descriptions of various sites, as well as the historical, cultural and political background is reasonably well done. However, I don't think that this guide has more information or is in any way clearer than the equivalent Lonely Planet guidebook, which I would recommend over this book for any traveler.

We tried to use this book during the week we spent in Syria. This book seemed the better choice, since it is the most recent guide. After half a day in Damascus, we gave up and went to buy the Lonely Planet. Main flaws:-- the maps are completely insufficient (we had to ask other travellers on the street to look at the maps in their books). Apparently the author has drawn them herself.

Afterwards we visited Damascus again, with our other guide book, and we enjoyed Damascus a lot more.-- Lists of places to eat and to stay are very short, and contain very few budget places (typically 1 or 2, which is absolutely useless. Furthermore descriptions are rather brief). There is more attention to top end places. On the pro side:++ The book spends much attention to history and culture, some parts are nice to read as background. Strange detail: the author claims that women never work as waitress in Syria, and in our week we saw several of them. Note: last year we use other Bradt guides (Zambia, Malawi), much to our satisfaction.

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