

WorldDenver Presents:

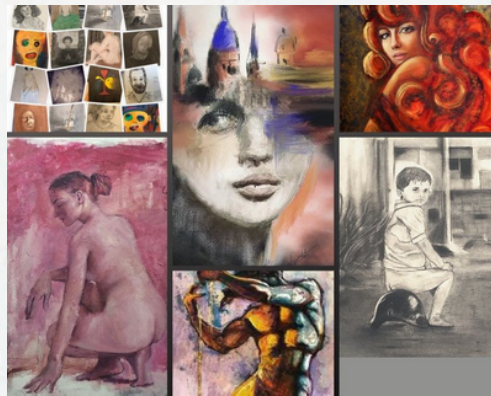
STAYCATIONS

a new way to travel the world without leaving your home

SNAPSHOT OF SYRIA

This Staycation was produced in partnership with Syria Draws, an online platform to promote and sell the work of Syrian artists scattered abroad. You can view select pieces at the [Cherry Creek Holiday Market](#) through December 23.

Learn more about [Syria Draws](#)



Salam! Welcome to beautiful Syria, an ancient Middle Eastern country that has stood as the gateway between Asia and the Western world for centuries. Known as the birthplace of prophets and poets, Syria is considered by many to have been the beating heart of the ancient world. After being under control of the Ottoman Empire for four centuries, Syria was placed under French mandate in 1920 and gained independence in 1946. Only 17 short years later, Syria was placed under emergency law for a staggering period of 48 years from 1963 to 2011. The state of emergency was lifted in 2011 when the civil war broke out following the Arab Spring. The Syrian conflict has created the largest wave of refugees to hit Europe since World War II with 11 million Syrians displaced from their homes.

Learn more about [Syria Draws](#)

CULTURE

Rising 3,773 feet above sea level and overlooking the oldest city in the world, Mount Qasioun watches over the Syrian capital of Damascus and is home to a cave steeped in legend where prayers are answered. In times of drought, the rulers of Damascus would climb to pray for rain within the shadows of the cave; in modern day Syria, a visit to the mountaintop is almost a weekly drive just to have a walk, unwind, and enjoy the view of the city from above. Damascus sits in the valley below, once verdant and lush, the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world with evidence that the site has been occupied as far back as 6300 B.C. In the Middle Ages, Damascus was a major point on the Silk Road and gave the name to the woven fibres known as damask. Today, Damascus is famous for its unique steel worldwide. The city has over 125 monuments from different periods of its history and the Ancient City of Damascus was inscribed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 1979. As Syrians were forced to flee civil war, many people had to leave their homes and their possessions while also losing beloved monuments of their proud history. A group of Syrian artists have since embarked on a mission to preserve this cultural heritage. Using clay, wood, and their ingenuity, they create models of historical monuments that have been destroyed during the Syrian civil war. Their goal is to preserve and pass on the memories of their rich history that younger generations won't have the chance to see.

Here in Denver, our friends at Syria Draws have collected art created by Syrian artists displaced by the diaspora who seek to pay homage to their beloved country from abroad. Scattered, displaced, unsettled by war, these artists have embarked to transform their diaspora journey into art. After the bombings, out of the ashes, comes joy and wonder. Visit www.SyriaDraws.com and mention discount code WDenver20 for 20% off any piece of art this holiday season. Art work is available to be viewed online and in person in Denver. Contact SyriaDraws@gmail.com for more information.

CUISINE

On the streets of Damascus, lightly scenting the air are the lingering aromas from the orange blossom and jasmine that grow in the city. In orchards and courtyards that are still standing, fountains bubble while city residents enjoy sweets made with honey and almonds. The most iconic dessert one can enjoy in Syria is an ice cream with a taffy-like consistency, creamy texture, subtly floral aroma, and nuttiness from its pistachio coating. At Bakdash Ice Cream Parlor in Damascus, this unique ice cream is made with mastic gum and rose water, then pounded with large wooden mallets and repeatedly pulled to create the taffy-like consistency. Try this recipe for yourself (pick up any ingredient you might be missing online or at the Middle East Market on Colorado Boulevard in Denver) and let us know if you enjoyed the arm workout!

BEVERAGE

What is a city without it's nightlife?! Thanks to the discovery of the Ebla Tablets in 1974, we know that Damascenes always knew how to have a good time and were producing beer as early as 2500 B.C! Today, alcohol in Syria is not banned as it is in some Muslim countries, nor is it reserved for the upper class elite or religious minorities. Syria's constitution uses Islamic jurisprudence as a primary source of law, but has kept alcohol legal, available, and cheap. While government-owned beer labels, such as Al-Shark or Barada, ceased production after the start of the civil war, Arados Beer launched in 2017 in Safita with the help of experts from the Czech Republic.

Arados Brewery represents the resurrection of mass-produced domestic beer in Syria with plans to produce 15 million liters per year! While you cannot buy it in the United States yet, Arados classified their beer as a Pilsner, and we recommend a cold one to enjoy with your ice cream.

