

Site : **Safita**

Country : **Syria**



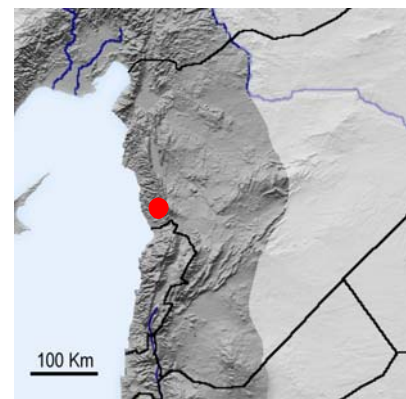
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SYNTHESIS

The history of the town of Safita is summed up in its ancient tower, the only remaining vestige of an old citadel, whose history is not known exactly: it was, however, already there at the time of the Crusades. For three centuries, the city has led the economic and cultural activities of the surrounding areas. Today, the population of Safita is composed of Moslems and Christians in equal proportions. The houses are mainly on hill slopes and around the tower area. These houses are quadrangular shaped and are built with white limestone and red tile roofings.

Country map



Regional scale



ARCHITECTURAL TYPOLOGIES PRESENT

Lebanese house.

COUNTRY'S ACCEPTED SIGNIFICANT SITES

Aleppo. Old city	Damascus. Old city	Harem
Izraa	Maloula	Mashkita
Safita	Sfireh	

HISTORY AND GENERAL INFORMATION

The town of Safita is renowned for its old tower which remained well preserved up till the end of the 19th century. Then, some inhabitants started building houses around the tower, even inside the structure and on its ramparts, covering most of the site and thus forming the small town of Safita.

Its old grouped constructions have a traditional style, but today, modern concrete buildings are blending in with the old houses.

— Surface area of the site	1.000 Ha
— Geographical co-ordinates	34,8° N 36,1 E
— Height above sea level	380 m
— Lithology	Limestone
— Population	27.500 inhabitants
— Population density	27,5 inhab/Ha
— Average annual maximum temperatures	28°C
— Average annual minimum temperatures	4°C
— Average of maximum temperatures during the hottest month for ten years	30°C
— Average of maximum temperatures during the coldest month for ten years	0°C
— Average rainfall	1.000-1.200 mm
— Average number of days of rain per year	50 days
— Specific characteristics	It is characterized by its old tower, vestige of an old citadel. Its remarkable and strategic location puts it within visual contact of all the nearby castles..
— Traditional economic activities	Olive-tree groves, olive oil, and soap industry.
— New economic activities	Agriculture, industry, tourism, and hand craft activities.
— Site's communications with its territory	The city is well connected by road to the national Homs-Tartous road.



CURRENT STATE OF VITALITY AND PRESERVATION

Many factors took part in the development of Safita, encouraging the development of restaurants, hotels and parks: the remarkable location of the town, close to many tourist areas such as "Machta Al Hélou" and "Kafroun", rich with old vestiges such as the large tower in the centre of the city and the old churches, the hill of Notre-Dame "Al Saidé" where Assumption festivities are organized every year. Public buses connect tourists to this city.

TRANSFORMATION PROCESS

Traditionally built limestone and basalt houses appeared at the foot of the tower, all close to one another. Then high stone and concrete buildings appeared on both sides of the main road, to the east and west of Safita, composing orderly districts on the east, west and south of the city. The new urban development programme of Safita helped open new roads to north and south.

INTERVENTIONS AND REHABILITATION PROGRAMMES

Aside from the regulated conservation of the central zone, no restoration program was reported.

Contacts

Municipality of Safita.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

Le Dictionnaire géographique de la Syrie – tome 4– éd. 1992 – organisation générale de topographie

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