



By Malak Hasan

# A Wadi Qana Picnic by the Freshwater Spring and Citrus Trees



To celebrate fall in Palestine and our favorite time of the year to plan outdoor activities, we decided to take you on a beautiful trip to one of the most amazing nature reserves in Palestine, the famous and evergreen Wadi Qana. This Palestinian oasis is a must-visit in Palestine if you want to hike, take beautiful photos, or simply spend a quiet morning or afternoon in nature with your friends and family.

Wadi Qana is located between the cities of Salfit, Qalqilya, and Nablus, in the northern West Bank. You can drive to Wadi Qana by taking route 60 in the direction of Nablus and then turning left onto route 505 right before you pass the village of Za'atara. As you pass the villages of Haris and Kifl Haris, take route 5066 which leads you to the heart of Wadi Qana.

Alternatively, you can drive to Wadi Qana from Ramallah through Birzeit, Nabi Saleh, Deir Ghassaneh, Kufir al-Dik, and Bruqin before you arrive at Route 5, from which you can drive by Kifl Haris and Deir Istya to Wadi Qana. While taking the highway is probably more straightforward, driving through the Palestinian villages will guarantee that you enjoy scenery like no other and maybe stop for a photo or two, especially in Wadi Amuriya in Deir Ghassaneh.

The drive down to the valley is an experience in itself. As you descend, you can notice the change in scenery. The valley stretches over 10,000 dunums and has 12 natural springs that overflow with water all year around. You can park your car near the sign at the entrance to the valley or drive all the way to the main park area next to one of the valley's many water springs, Ein al-Fawwar. The walk from the main road to the spring is approximately one kilometer and you pass through long stretches of land planted with all kinds of trees, such as olives, almonds, and citrus. It is an easy 15-minute walk, but if you are planning a lavish picnic, then maybe it's a better idea to park your car by the spring.



For our quiet and relaxing morning, we planned a small picnic with some of our friends and prepared a tomato dish with garlic and green chillies next to a side of fried goat cheese and homemade *labaneh* balls. The star of the picnic was the delicious Jerusalem sesame bread brought by our friends straight from Jerusalem.

While waiting for the tomato dish to be ready, we took a small tour around the park where we saw local Palestinian farmers tending their land. We met some of the farmers and returned with enough lemons and figs to accompany our small breakfast. We took plenty of photos of the beautiful freshwater springs and animals, and watched a variety of birds cruise the sky above us.

We highly recommend visiting Wadi Qana if you enjoy spending time in nature but want to avoid walking for hours to reach your destination. The park is child-friendly and you can play different kinds of sports, practice yoga, or maybe enjoy a good read.

*Malak Hasan and Bisan Alhajhasan are the founders of Ahlan Palestine, a travel blog that promotes tourism in Palestine. You can learn all about the best travel destinations in Palestine if you follow their Instagram page @AhlanPalestine.*

