

THE  
RESPONSIBLE  
TRAVELER

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**ecolodge**

TOUT JUSTE  
AVANT NOËL

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**agriculture**

LEBANESE CONSERVATION  
VOLUNTEER'S PROGRAM

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AL KHAN AL MAKSSOUD'S PRODUCTS

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POSTHARVEST PROJECT

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arcenciel's ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM - AWARENESS



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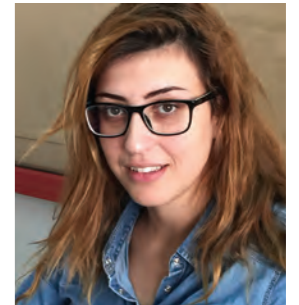
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Rana Abdou  
Agriculture program  
arcenciel

"Pity the nation that wears a cloth it does not weave and eats a bread it does not harvest" -Khalil Gibran  
Our earth is a heritage from our ancestors; our duty is to keep it safe for the future generations, as our ancestors did.

It is dangerous to interfere with the earth's equilibrium, it may cause devastating, damage, that can persist over generations. Unfortunately, many violations against nature are occurring all over the world.

In a small country like Lebanon, resources are limited and our agriculture is rapidly draining the little that remains. Today we have no other choice than to efficiently make use of these remaining resources or spiral into prominent deficiency. Supporting the local agriculture, the local industry and our local ecotourism is a must.

Let's work hand in hand in order to better the future for our descendants; to give them the future that we dream of, today.

The key is to each do their part, to participate in development!



## arcenciel, THE ORIGINS

arcenciel was born around the years 1984-1985, in the midst of the Lebanese, civil war; the initiative sprung out of the need of young veterans - who lost their mobility in the war, and wanted to avoid being limited to their houses, that seemed more like jails. From this, the idea of an association, that would promote their social integration and insertion, was born. This idea arose due to the strong will of a few people who wanted to be able to live fully and independently regardless of their disability.

At the time, the Lebanese populace was ripping itself apart and territories had become divided between the communities according to their religious and political affiliations. Massive relocation of families and communities was underway; and in this chaos - arcenciel stood differently; it fought against the grain, creating a structure that would serve everyone equally with no discrimination. This is where the name arcenciel came from, as it includes all the colors, and rises the same way for everyone: "And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth." - Genesis.



arcenciel proved itself to be the association that serves each and every person with a disability without any distinction. And even though sectarianism and segregation were taking over the country, arcenciel was, indeed able to work with everyone, because the issues of handicap and difficulty transcend religious and political disputes. Although a lot of the people arcenciel served in the beginning were involved in the civil conflict, their priority was to find a solution to their handicap; because of arcenciel these individuals were able to work together for the recognition of their rights and to change the way people perceive them: they were people, who did not allow their disabilities to define them.

Today, arcenciel is 32 years old - has spread to cover more Lebanese territory, offers up to 50 services and serves as much as 50,000 individuals a year.

The association's mission is still as focused as ever, with the one constant goal: to serve each and every individual who walks through the arcenciel center doors seeking assistance.





## TOUT JUSTE AVANT NOËL

This December, the Domaine de Taanayel lit up to celebrate the Christmas spirit and bring together the people of the Bekaa' region together to drink, eat, laugh and play during this festive season.

arcenciel's tourism program hosted its Christmas market for its second consecutive year – "Tout Juste Avant Noël" at the Domaine de Taanayel on the 10th, 11th and 12th of December.

The market aims mainly at promoting the Bekaa' region through exposing independent local producers, crafters and designers from the region and Beirut to strengthen community ties and expose these independent crafters and producers to one another in hopes of forging bonds and creative ties between the Beirut and Bekaa' regions.



Food and drink were served throughout the Christmas market, for what are Christmas festivities without good food and wine!

The food court was managed by arcenciel's tourism initiative "Al Khan El Maksoud", that served food ranging from grilled meat and falafel, to lighter snacks such as Popcorn and Mighli, which can be best described as the characteristic Christmas pudding in Lebanon.

The participating local wineries were Domaine des Tourelles, Chateau Kefraya, Clos St. Thomas, Domaine Wardy, and Chateau Heritage; they set up their stands to promote their seasons' delicacies in promotional packages that were prepared especially for this Christmas market; they served hot wine to compliment the cold Bekaa' weather in which the celebrations were taking place.

arcenciel itself also took part in the market and set up stands to expose their own products to the audience of the region.

## TOUT JUSTE AVANT NOËL

arcenciel set up an internal stand, which exhibited the work of the ceramics workshop based in the arcenciel center of Jisr el Wati; the initiative serves to train and employ women in the manufacturing of ceramic goods. arcenciel also displayed their "Over the Rainbow" products, which exposed pillows that were made with repurposed cloth, aiming at promoting recycling and the decrease of waste. The stand also encompassed second hand books that were being sold at accessible prices, in hopes of raising awareness on the importance of literature in a world overruled by social media.

"Beit Al Mouzareh" – a community that sets up organic farmers' markets that aspire to promote local farmers' goods also set up their stand in the market; as well as the Domaine de Taanayel itself that exhibited its freshly produced goods – to further push for the common interest in sustainable development.

The market's main target audience was the families of the region; the entertainment program was comprised of a choir performance by the students of SSCC Zahle, hosted a Misses Clause who narrated children's stories on stage along with her elves, a program of children's workshops that revolved around fun but educational programs such as cooking and painting, and lastly – arcenciel's own circus troop, Cirquenciel - launched circus workshops, parades and circus shows to liven up the atmosphere. Santa Clause came to see the children throughout the market and had yummy treats to give away to the children who he was happy to greet in his sleigh.

The Christmas market could not have been possible without the support of its sponsors, arcenciel remains grateful for their backing and their ongoing partnership with: BLOM Bank, Wilibi, Alliance SNA and Domaine des Tourelles.





## AL KHAN AL MAKSSOUD'S PRODUCTS

In today's world of all-night supermarkets and ready-made everything, it's easy to forget that jam didn't always come from the store, produced in large bulks at steamy industries. Home-made jam tastes fresher than the store-bought produce and now, buying fresher products also means directly participating in development.

Al Khan Al Makssoud, arcenciel's traditional Lebanese food initiative in the Bekaa' region has finally begun producing it's first line of goods. Supported by the newly renovated kitchen of the Khan, women from the region are being trained and employed, thus empowered by this endeavor.

The women have begun working a little over a month ago, and have learnt the process of preparing fruits or vegetables mixed with sugar, in a specific method to produce jam. The product is then sealed in airtight jars for long-term preservation. The first batch has been released onto the market and has slowly started gaining the attention of food lovers of the region – this is mainly due to the originality of the choice of fruit chosen for the first wave of produce; this season in Taanayel, brought forth Quince & Pumpkin Jam produced at the kitchen of Al Khan Al Makssoud.

The products were first released onto the arcenciel stand at the Christmas market that the Tourism Program hosted in the Domaine de Taanayel this past December. The arcenciel produce stand hosted these freshly prepared jams, alongside Khan Al Makssoud's Kawarma (pronounced: 'Awarma), it is a traditional method of storing Lamb meat in Lamb fat and is a key ingredient in most customary indigenous winter dishes.

You can find Al Khan Al Makssoud's products at the Khan Al Makssoud in Taanayel, and at the Domaine. **For more information: 03 124 279.**

### What to see

408km of railway connected Beirut to Damascus, Syria and Haifa in the early 80's – the steam train ran until the Lebanese civil war destroyed most of the tracks, effectively putting an end to rail transport in the country.

The rusted and decayed remnants of the now abandoned stations, still stand – as though frozen in time, all across the coast of the country.

The Bekaa' Valley, specifically the area of Rayak (pronounced Riya') is home to one of the stations that stand still, as a reminder of Lebanon's golden age. Throughout its operational course, the Riyak train station served multiple purposes, including designing and building airplanes for the French military in conjunction with the still present nearby Riyak airbase.

Don't forget to stop by one of the many conventional restaurants around the station that serve traditional Lebanese food that one can enjoy to compliment to virgin scenery of the Bekaa's very rich Lebanese landscape!



© Spice photography



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## HEATING SYSTEMS: CREATING A SOCIAL SPACE IN LEBANESE HOUSES

Before the appearance of oil or gas stoves, electricity, or even solar energy; the Lebanese relied on burning wood to keep warm when the cold weather knocked at their doors. In traditional mud-houses, a hole in a corner of the main room was used to create a fireplace, with its chimney.

Later, with the emergence of brick-houses, wood-burning stoves increasingly replaced fireplaces. Usually installed in the middle of the central living room, with their pipe going up to the roof, these stoves presented a social place where family and friends would gather to chat, drink tea, eat and finally spend most of their time. Wood and oil stoves are still used today in some traditional villages.

Later, fuel oil heaters, as well built with a pipe going up to the ceiling, started appearing in the region. Between the years 1950 and 1960, houses were progressively supplied with electricity, which enabled electric heating.

More recently, many living rooms included heaters linked to a gas bottle, considered to be cleaner and easier to install.

These fireplaces or wood burning stoves traditionally contributed to bring families and friends together and to create a communal and convivial living space in the Lebanese culture. Since central heating is still rare in Lebanon, this social space around heaters is still maintained in many houses.



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## POSTHARVEST

In 2014, arcenciel's agriculture program, developed a proposal that aimed to strengthen the agri-food sector by supporting the local farmers; arcenciel aimed to accomplish this by receiving funds to build and manage a post-harvest unit in the "Domaine de Taanayel". The proposal was reviewed by the European Union it got approved and funded.

After over two long years of planning and construction, we are proud to announce that the post-harvest unit is up and running! The post-harvest facility can store up to 1600 tons or 55,000 crates. It is built mainly to fit apples, pears, potatoes and grapes, with a precooling room to ensure that the cooling process preserves quality rather than damage it. There are a total of 7 cooling rooms of around 100m<sup>2</sup> each, and a 50m<sup>2</sup> rooms for sorting, grading, cleaning and packaging.

The Refrigerated rooms can store a large variety of fruits and vegetables (apples, potatoes, iceberg, cabbage etc.)

Our post-harvest unit is also equipped with a precooling room, which is rarely found in other local post-harvest units due to its additional cost and the lack of awareness of its benefits among farmers and traders.

The Pre-cooling benefits include:

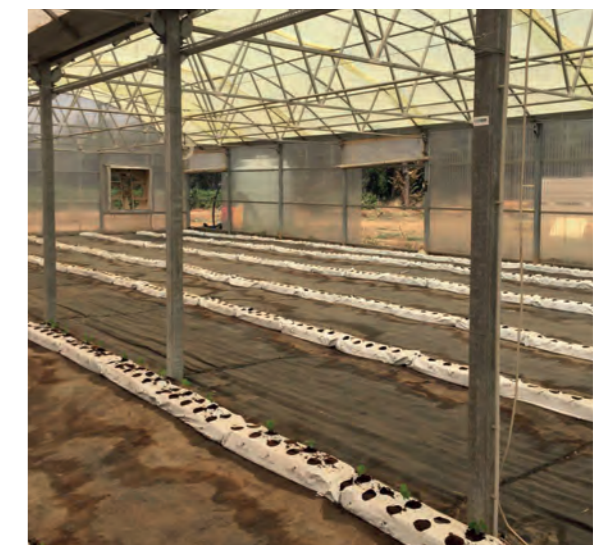
- Lowering the required workload of a cold storage since optimum storage temperature is reached more quickly
- Restricting and minimizing respiratory activity, thereby conserving the weight of the produce, and enzymatic degradation of the produce harvested; thus preventing softening, water loss and wilting
- Preventing microbial growth, such as bacteria and fungi thereby decreasing the rate of decay
- Delaying chilling injuries for certain fruits

These factors will substantially reduce food waste and improve the quality of the products.

The aim of the post-harvest unit is to help and protect all the farmers in the region. The year 2016 has been particularly rough for the local agriculture, with neighboring countries closing their borders to our produce; farmers could not sell their yield in time and ended up losing most of it. The post-harvest unit will greatly prolong the lifespan of the produce; it will also through the grading and sorting unit allow the farmers to tap into new foreign markets making them less vulnerable to political turmoil. Export laws are getting increasingly strict, the postharvest will not only prepare the produce for exports but will also inform the local farmers by providing all the information on requirements for exports.

All these services will be provided at below market price in order to keep the services accessible to all. These services would greatly reduce the local agricultural waste, and provide a new source of income for farmers.

Arcenciel hopes to one day be able to asses all the farmers needs and bring back the Lebanese agriculture to its former splendor.





## LEBANESE CONSERVATION VOLUNTEER'S PROGRAM

In a small island far up north, between the world's biggest iceberg and a traitorous volcano, one can find a small hut in the middle of Iceland's biggest nature reserve, Skaftafell. In that particular cottage, people meet from all over the world during the entirety of summer.



They all meet for a common purpose, to be conservation volunteers, to make a change from within. They all become Icelandic conservation volunteers (ICV), trained by leaders from all over the world and guided by local rangers; the volunteers carry out a multitude of tasks throughout the season that involve mainly:

- Landscape restoration: Path-work, trail building using stone and wood
- Drainage construction : Construction of drains to protect the path from erosion and material fall off
- Invasive wildlife removal: Some plants like the Icelandic lupins spread like wildfire and disrupt the ecosystem, the volunteer's job is to prevent them from reaching the natural reserves.

In the summer of 2015, an arcenciel volunteer from the agriculture program ventured to the lands of ice and fire to learn from their methods. Astonished by the involvement of both the international and local community to protect the environment, he returned to Lebanon convinced that the only way to save the environment is to educate and include everyone in its conservation.

In early 2016 arcenciel teamed up with the Hermes foundation, both sharing the same vision decided to bring the project to life. However, the local ecosystem is very different from Iceland's. With a lot less traffic on the hiking trails and a lot more threats to our forests, creating a group of volunteers that focuses on landscape restoration seemed less effective. To best address this issue, arcenciel joined forces with veterans in the field like 33 North and Lebanese Agriculture Research Institution (LARI) to design a new set of activities to add to the existing ICV ones.



## LEBANESE CONSERVATION VOLUNTEER'S PROGRAM



After the activities were clearly defined, we needed to pick the right people to train to become trainers (TOT). For optimal results we looked for 22 volunteers aged from 20- 28 with different backgrounds. After a strict selection process, we succeeded in assembling an academically diverse group of young dedicated volunteers. Civil engineers, biology, biodiversity, agronomy bachelors and masters students from all over Lebanon, all meet in the Shouf Biosphere reserve to start the training. For their training in forestry and pest and disease management we had agronomists from LARI, arcenciel and USEK; 33 North for first aid and search and rescue; For trail building and landscape restoration the arcenciel volunteer revisited Iceland for a 10 days TOT with ICV, with an ICV Landscape restoration from England.

Those activities are:

1. Pest and disease management: To asses every reserves needs in monitoring and control of pests and diseases.
- 2 Mapping and orienteering allows our volunteers to do mapping work, through topographic maps they are able to better examine outbreaks, locate injured travelers, and work in remote areas and design better trails and paths.
3. Their first aid and search and rescue expertise: Combined with mapping and orienteering the LCV community is able to perform first aid in remote areas and carefully locate and extract the injured to safety.
4. Wild fire prevention: In order to combat the growing amount of wildfires in the country.



After a successful two weeks, the newly formed trainers helped in training 140 more volunteers, surpassing the expected beneficiaries by almost double in only 6 month. LCV today through its success is receiving additional funds to increase its reach throughout the country.



# THE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM - AWARENESS

As the nation facing its "waste battle", one of the most daunting issues of the country, is the mounting waste problem, which impairs public health, pollutes the environment and threatens to drown people in toxicity. All that being said, hope for a better future is down falling in peoples thoughts, lack of confidence in any given authority, lack of information regarding solutions... they all sum up, to pinpoint the missing decentralized solution.

Since 1985, arcenciel's strategy is to implement pilot projects on a small scale, in order to gradually enhance them according to the needs of the community and the country. The steps also include reaching a public policy and a decree in order to reach the intended goal on a bigger scale.

Since 2009, the absence of waste management strategy made forecasting the waste crises a complete certainty. The waste was being landfilled and not treated or valorized. The team in arcenciel started an initiative called the "rolling caps", which consists of collecting bottle caps form citizens in order to help the environment. The project was to prove that our community can sort its domestic waste when asked to do so. Taking that that proof, the project moved to it's a next step, where 3 secondary sorting stations were inaugurated in Taanayel, Baabda and Damour. The stations goals were to showcase municipalities across the country to start sorting at source and implementing stations as such on different scales.

The beginning of the crises market the beginning of municipal implementations, like Bikfaya, Beit El chaar, Ajaltoun and many more municipalities who are willing to build stations but the lack of funds is the main obstacle in their battle to fight centralization and waste crises.

The team is currently working thoroughly with various municipalities and institutions in order to spread awareness and share expertise in waste management solutions.

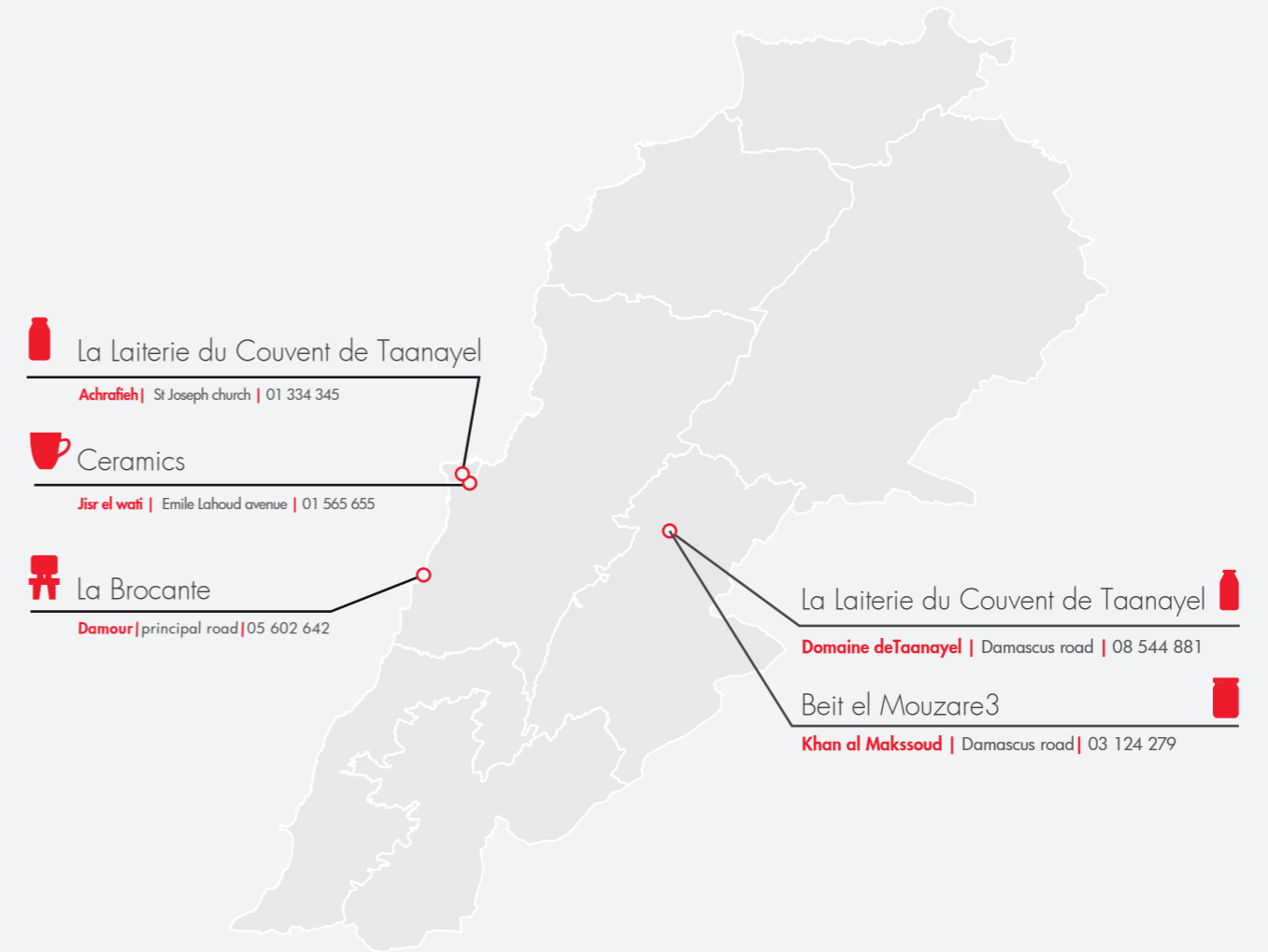
In addition arcenciel trucks are collecting recyclables from any organization who is sorting its waste in order to spread the message. The team already gave more than 200 awareness sessions in 2016 and 100 TOTs (training of trainers) for key persons responsible for waste collection and management.

Last but not least, proper waste management solutions target all the components of sustainable development goals in all its environmental, economic and social aspects. In retrospect, this will lead to embolden decentralization which will benefit the country.



# Where you can find arcenciel products ?

all of arcenciel's revenues are reinvested into social and environmental work



| CERAMICS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | LA BROCANTE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | LA LAITERIE DU COUVENT DE TAANAYEL                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | BEIT EL MOUZARE3                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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| <p>arcenciel's ceramic workshop manufactures and sells custom made arcenciel products.</p> <p>The in-house production is run entirely by people with disabilities.</p> <p>Products start out as clay and end up as decorative household items. The workshop provides a welcoming environment and work space to people in difficulty.</p> <p>Launched in 1987, it is one of the first true social enterprises in Lebanon.</p> | <p>La Brocante upcycles used donated furniture and old household appliances to re-sell them as vintage items at our center in Damour.</p> <p>At first, the donated furniture was given away through arcenciel to displaced war veterans returning home to Damour. This service was meant to help young couples furnish their houses and to encourage repopulation of the Damour area post-war.</p> <p>La Brocante never stopped helping people in need; until today La Brocante provides free services and furnitures to those who cannot afford them.</p> | <p>The dairy farm, or malbana, as the local residents like to say, is the showcase of the Domaine, selling products produced at arcenciel's farms.</p> <p>All products are natural, of farm and craft production, without preservatives or additives. The entire process is completed on site at the Domaine de Taanayel.</p> <p>With the help of the Jesuit fathers, in 1958 the dairy farm began to commercially produce dairy products. The actual brand was created and put on the market in 1994.</p> | <p>Beit el Mouzare3's mission is to support and improve the livelihood of our local farmers through fair trade and the creation of a farmers market.</p> <p>Creating an environment that unites all cultures under one roof to celebrate the land we love, while promoting a healthy lifestyle and an eco-friendly culture.</p> |



events

**April**

EASTER LUNCH  
**16 April**  
 Khan al Makssoud

**June**

KHAYMET RAMADAN  
**25 - 26 - 27 June**  
 Khan al Makssoud

**July**

BROCANTE DES  
 ARTISTES  
**31 June - 2 July**  
 Achrafieh

**September**

FESTIVAL DE L'ARAK  
**23 - 24 September**  
 Khan al Makssoud

**December**

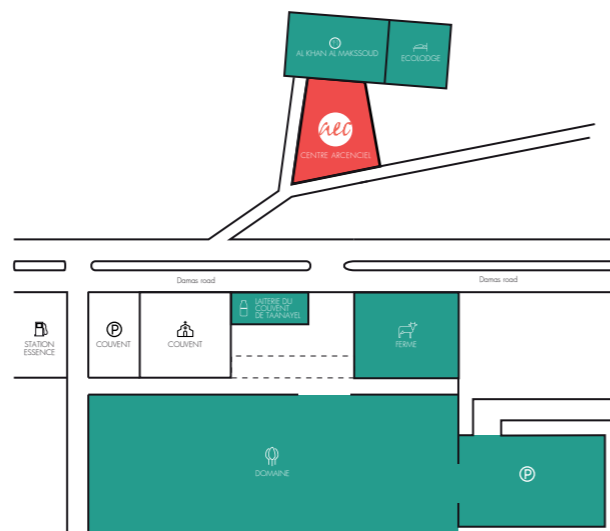
TOUT JUSTE AVANT NOËL  
**9 - 10 December**  
 Domaine de Taanayel

Ecolodge de Taanayel & Al Khan al Makssoud

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