

# Forum and the Basilica

Description of the site: The Basilica and the public square are among the essential foundations of urban planning in the Roman city of Sebastia as their vital locations. Archaeological excavations have shown that extensive operations were done on the site before establishing these two sites. A rectangular retaining wall surrounded the area; to overcome the different levels of the hill to form what looks like a comprehensive, flat platform for the construction site. The Basilica was in the western part of the site, and it is a rectangular building with dimensions of 68 x 53.2 m in a north-south direction. It was divided from the inside by three rows of stone columns, some still standing, with a height of up to 6 m. Their function was to support the roof of the building. The southern facade from the inside includes an apse that protrudes from the outer wall, believed to have housed Roman gods, and an altar for offering sacrifices. The building is directly connected to the public square opposite its eastern wall, a planning tradition adopted by Roman cities in all regions. It was a place for concluding and documenting trading deals between major merchants, and resolving and settling any disputes that might arise through agreed regulations and customs. As for the public square, it occupied a vast area in the form of a rectangle with dimensions of 128 x 72.5 m. It was an open square with a paved orderly stone tiled floor. Columns surmounted by decorative stone cornices surrounded the square and the public. In subsequent periods, these columns were moved to erect new buildings within the city. In the southern part of the square, archaeological excavations revealed the remains of stone archways that carried water channels drawn from Ein Haroun, located in the village of Al-Naqura, adjacent to the city from the south. This spring was the only source of water for the city. The public square is a meeting place for the city's residents and visitors, and a public space in the city center. The square, which is known locally as Al-Baydar Square, was rehabilitated and developed to stimulate tourism in Sebastia.

## Sites & Attractions: Type

- [The basilica was a place for concluding and documenting commercial deals between major merchants and resolving and settling any commercial disputes in the Roman era](#)
- [The public square is a meeting place for the city's residents and visitors](#)
- [and a public area](#)

## Address

They are located at the eastern end of the top of the "Acropolis" site, and are bordered on the west by the remains of the ancient buildings on the hill. To the east is the Interpretation Center of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and res...  
Sebastia, in the center of the village - near the old mosque.  
PS-NBS  
Palestinian Territories

32.276963,35.192342  
[View in Google Maps](#)

## Booking On Site

No

## Booking Online

No

## Booking via Phone

No

## Fee: Special Group Rate

No

**Advance booking required**

No

**Agent Voucher Accepted**

No

**Handicap bathroom**

No

**Stairs**

No

**Wheelchair Friendly**

No

**Stroller Friendly**

No