

LIBYA

Gaddafi's Utopia



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Sabrata. A musician of the citizens band.



Qasr-el-Lybia. A detail of the castle's walls built during the Turkish Age.

Ten thousand years of history. Civilizations that have fought, traded, loved, hated, overlapped, merged and intertwined in an inextricable tangle. Ten thousand years of history and a single, eternal common denominator: the Mediterranean. With Libya at the center: yesterday as today, it is both the natural gateway to – and exit point from – Africa. The immense Gulf of Sirte sits like a silent invitation to land, to explore, or to invade: it could either be the neck of a funnel or the mouth of a river.

Until 2011, modern Libya, which was ruled with an iron fist by Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, was a Jamahiriya, i.e. a state of the masses: or at least it wanted to present itself to the world as such. But the few people who managed to enter the country soon discovered that the Jamahiriya was an unrealized, and probably unattainable utopia.

These images date back to 2005: six years before Gaddafi's dramatic downfall.



Tripoli. Young people coming back after shopping in Green Square.



Apollonia. Ruins of the Greek city, theater on the sea.



Tripoli. Al-Kabir Hotel.



Sabrata. A horse reaching the parade organized for the first horseback riding festival edition.



Sabrata. City ruins, the theater.



Tripoli. In an alley of the old city.



Cyrene. Greek age statues (it is hypothesized they would represent the departed soul).



Sabrata. In a Berber tent during the first edition of the horseback riding festival.



Tripoli. An alley of the souq in the old city.



Tripoli. The city center viewed from above.



Sabrata. A Berber horseman.



Susa. The almost abandoned Italian district.



Benghazi. In a courtyard.

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