

= Haifa =

Haifa ( Hebrew : ?????? Hefa , Hebrew pronunciation : [ ʔeʔfa ] , colloquial Hebrew pronunciation : [ ʔʔai ʔ fa ] Hayfa ; Arabic : ????? Hayfa ) , the third @-@ largest city in the State of Israel , has a population of over 277 @,@ 082 . Another 300 @,@ 000 people live in towns directly adjacent to the city including Daliyat al @-@ Karmel , the Krayot , Nesher , Tirat Carmel , and some kibbutzim . Together these areas form a contiguous urban area , home to nearly 600 @,@ 000 residents , which makes up the inner core of the Haifa metropolitan area , the second- or third @-@ most populous metropolitan area in Israel . It is also home to the Bahá 'í World Centre , a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a destination for Baha 'i pilgrims .

Built on the slopes of Mount Carmel , the settlement has a history spanning more than 3 @,@ 000 years . The earliest known settlement in the vicinity was Tell Abu Hawam , a small port city established in the Late Bronze Age ( 14th century BCE ) . In the 3rd century CE , Haifa was known as a dye @-@ making center . Over the centuries , the city has changed hands : being conquered and ruled by the Phoenicians , Persians , Hasmoneans , Romans , Byzantines , Arabs , Crusaders , Ottomans , British , and the Israelis . Since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 , the Haifa Municipality has governed the city .

As of 2016 the city is a major seaport located on Israel 's Mediterranean coastline in the Bay of Haifa covering 63 @.@ 7 square kilometres ( 24 @.@ 6 sq mi ) . It lies about 90 kilometres ( 56 mi ) north of Tel Aviv and is the major regional center of northern Israel . Two respected academic institutions , the University of Haifa and the Technion , are located in Haifa , in addition to the largest k @-@ 12 school in Israel , the Hebrew Reali School . The city plays an important role in Israel 's economy . It is home to Matam , one of the oldest and largest high @-@ tech parks in the country . Haifa Bay is a center of heavy industry , petroleum refining and chemical processing . Haifa formerly functioned as the western terminus of an oil pipeline from Iraq via Jordan .

= = Etymology = =

The earliest named settlement within the domain of modern @-@ day Haifa was a city known as Sycaminum . Tel Shikmona Hebrew meaning " mound of the Ficus sycomorus " ( Arabic Tell el @-@ Semak or Tell es @-@ Samak , meaning " mound of the fish " ) preserved and transformed this ancient name and is mentioned once in the Mishnah ( composed c . 200 CE ) for the wild fruits that grow around it . , with locals using it to refer to a coastal tell at the foot of the Carmel Mountains that contains its remains .

The name Efa first appears during Roman rule , some time after the end of the 1st century , when a Roman fortress and small Jewish settlement were established not far from Tell es @-@ Samak . Haifa is also mentioned more than 100 times in the Talmud , a book central to Judaism .

Hefa or Hepha in Eusebius of Caesarea 's 4th @-@ century work , Onomasticon ( Onom . 108 , 31 ) , is said to be another name for Sycaminus . This synonymizing of the names is explained by Moshe Sharon who writes that the twin ancient settlements , which he calls Haifa @-@ Sycaminon , gradually expanded into one another , becoming a twin city known by the Greek names Sycaminon or Sycaminos Polis . References to this city end with the Byzantine period .

Around the 6th century , Porphyreon or Porphyrea is mentioned in the writings of William of Tyre , and while it lies within the area covered by modern Haifa , it was a settlement situated south of Haifa @-@ Sycaminon .

Following the Arab conquest in the 7th century , Haifa was used to refer to a site established on Tell es @-@ Samak upon what were already the ruins of Sycaminon ( Shiqmona ) . Haifa ( or Haifah ) is mentioned by the mid @-@ 11th @-@ century Persian chronicler Nasir Khusraw , and the 12th- and 13th @-@ century Arab chroniclers , Muhammad al @-@ Idrisi and Yaqut al @-@ Hamawi .

The Crusaders , who captured Haifa briefly in the 12th century , call it Caiphas , and believe its name related to Cephas , the Aramaic name of Simon Peter . Eusebius is also said to have referred to Hefa as Caiaphas civitas , and Benjamin of Tudela , the 12th @-@ century Jewish traveller and chronicler , is said to have attributed the city 's founding to Caiaphas , the Jewish high priest at the

time of Jesus .

Other spellings in English have included Caipha , Kaipha , Caiffa , Kaiffa and Khaifa .

Haifa al- ' Atiqah ( Arabic : " Ancient Haifa " ) is another name used by locals to refer to Tell es @-@ Samak , as it was the site of Haifa when it was a hamlet of 250 residents , before it was moved in 1764 @-@ 5 to a new fortified site founded by Zahir al @-@ Umar 1 @.@ 5 miles ( 2 @.@ 4 kilometres ) to the east . The new village , the nucleus of modern Haifa , was originally named al @-@ imara al @-@ jadida ( Arabic : " the new construction " ) , but locals called it Haifa al @-@ Jadida ( Arabic : " New Haifa " ) at first , and then simply Haifa . In the early 20th century , Haifa al ' Atiqah was repopulated as a predominantly Arab Christian neighborhood of Haifa as it expanded outward from its new location .

The ultimate origin of the name Haifa remains unclear . One theory holds it derives from the name of the high priest Caiaphas . Some Christians believe it was named for Saint Peter , whose Aramaic name was Keiphah . Another theory holds it could be derived from the Hebrew verb root ??? ( hafa ) , meaning to cover or shield , i.e. Mount Carmel covers Haifa ; others point to a possible origin in the Hebrew word ???? ( hof ) , meaning shore , or ????? ????? ( hof yafe ) , meaning beautiful shore .

= = History = =

= = = Early history = = =

A small port city known today as Tell Abu Hawam was established Late Bronze Age ( 14th century BCE ) . During the 6th century BCE , Greek geographer Scylax told of a city " between the bay and the Promontory of Zeus " ( i.e. , the Carmel ) which may be a reference to Shikmona , a locality in the Haifa area , during the Persian period . By Hellenistic times , the city had moved to a new site south of what is now Bat Galim because the port 's harbour had become blocked with sand . About the 3rd century CE , the city was first mentioned in Talmudic literature , as a Jewish fishing village and the home of Rabbi Avdimi and other Jewish scholars . A Greek @-@ speaking population living along the coast at this time was engaged in commerce .

Haifa was located near the town of Shikmona , a center for making the traditional Tekhelet dye used in the garments of the high priests in the Temple . The archaeological site of Shikmona is southwest of Bat Galim . Mount Carmel and the Kishon River are also mentioned in the Bible . A grotto on the top of Mount Carmel is known as the " Cave of Elijah " , traditionally linked to the Prophet Elijah and his apprentice , Elisha . In Arabic , the highest peak of the Carmel range is called the Muhraqa , or " place of burning , " harking back to the burnt offerings and sacrifices there in Canaanite and early Israelite times

Early Haifa is believed to have occupied the area which extends from the present @-@ day Rambam Hospital to the Jewish Cemetery on Yafo Street . The inhabitants engaged in fishing and agriculture .

Under Byzantine rule , Haifa continued to grow but did not assume major importance . Following the Arab conquest of Palestine in the 630s @-@ 40s , Haifa was largely overlooked in favor of the port city of ' Akka . Under the Rashidun Caliphate , Haifa began to develop . In the 9th century under the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphates , Haifa established trading relations with Egyptian ports and the city featured several shipyards . The inhabitants , Arabs and Jews , engaged in trade and maritime commerce . Glass production and dye @-@ making from marine snails were the city 's most lucrative industries .

= = = Crusader , Ayyubid and Mamluk rule = = =

Prosperity ended in 1100 or 1101 , when Haifa was besieged and blockaded by the Crusaders and then conquered after a fierce battle with its Jewish inhabitants and Fatimid garrison . Under the Crusaders , Haifa was reduced to a small fortified coastal stronghold . It was a part of the Principality of Galilee within the Kingdom of Jerusalem . Following their victory at the Battle of Hattin , Saladin 's

Ayyubid army captured Haifa in mid @-@ July 1187 and the city 's Crusader fortress was destroyed . The Crusaders under Richard the Lionheart retook Haifa in 1191 .

In the 12th century religious hermits started inhabiting the caves on Mount Carmel , and in the 13th century they formed a new Catholic monastic order , the Carmelites . Under Muslim rule , the church which they had built on Mount Carmel was turned into a mosque , later becoming a hospital . In the 19th century , it was restored as a Carmelite monastery , the Stella Maris Monastery . The altar of the church as we see it today , stands over a cave associated with Prophet Elijah .

In 1265 , the army of Baibars the Mamluk captured Haifa , destroying its fortifications , which had been rebuilt by King Louis IX of France , as well as the majority of the city 's homes to prevent the European Crusaders from returning . For much of their rule , the city was desolate in the Mamluk period between the 13th and 16th centuries . Information from this period is scarce . During Mamluk rule in the 14th century , al @-@ Idrisi wrote that Haifa served as the port for Tiberias and featured a " fine harbor for the anchorage of galleys and other vessels .

= = = Ottoman era = = =

In 1596 , Haifa appeared in Ottoman tax registers as being in the Nahiya of Sahil Atlit of the Liwa of Lajjun . It had a population of 32 Muslim households and paid taxes on wheat , barley , summercrops , olives , and goats or beehives .

Haifa was a hamlet of 250 inhabitants in 1764 @-@ 5 . It was located at Tell el @-@ Semak , the site of ancient Sycaminum . In 1765 Zahir al @-@ Umar , the Arab ruler of Acre and the Galilee , moved the population to a new fortified site 1 @.@ 5 miles ( 2 @.@ 4 kilometres ) to the east and laid waste to the old site . According to historian Moshe Sharon , the new Haifa was established by Zahir in 1769 . This event marked the beginning of the town 's life at its modern location . After al @-@ Umar 's death in 1775 , the town remained under Ottoman rule until 1918 , with the exception of two brief periods .

In 1799 , Napoleon Bonaparte conquered Haifa during his unsuccessful campaign to conquer Palestine and Syria , but soon had to withdraw ; in the campaign 's final proclamation , Napoleon took credit for having razed the fortifications of " Kaïffa " ( as the name was spelled at the time ) along with those of Gaza , Jaffa and Acre .

Between 1831 and 1840 , the Egyptian viceroy Muhammad Ali governed Haifa , after his son Ibrahim Pasha had wrested its control from the Ottomans . When the Egyptian occupation ended and Acre declined , the importance of Haifa rose .

The arrival of the German Templers in 1868 , who settled in what is now known as the German Colony of Haifa , was a turning point in Haifa 's development . The Templers built and operated a steam @-@ based power station , opened factories and inaugurated carriage services to Acre , Nazareth and Tiberias , playing a key role in modernizing the city .

The first major Jewish Immigration took place at the middle 19th century from Morocco , with small immigration from Turkey few years later . A wave of European Jews arrived at the end of the 19th century from Romania . The Central Jewish Colonisation Society in Romania purchased over 1 @,@ 000 acres ( 4 @.@ 0 km2 ) near Haifa . As the Jewish settlers had been city dwellers , they hired the former fellahin tenants to instruct them in agriculture .

In 1909 , Haifa became important to the Bahá 'í Faith when the remains of the Báb , founder of the Bábí Faith and forerunner of Bahá 'u'lláh in the Bahá 'í Faith , were moved from Acre to Haifa and interred in the shrine built on Mount Carmel . Bahá 'ís consider the shrine to be their second holiest place on Earth after the Shrine of Bahá 'u'lláh in Acre . Its precise location on Mount Carmel was shown by Bahá 'u'lláh himself to his eldest son , `Abdu 'l @-@ Bahá , in 1891 . `Abdu 'l @-@ Bahá planned the structure , which was designed and completed several years later by his grandson , Shoghi Effendi . In a separate room , the remains of `Abdu 'l @-@ Bahá were buried in November 1921 .

A branch of the Hejaz railway , known as the Jezreel Valley railway , was built between 1903 and 1905 . This event accelerated the growth of Haifa , which became a township ( nahiya ) centre in Akka in the sanjak of Beirut Eyalet before the end of Ottoman rule . The Technion Institute of

Technology was established around this time , that is , in 1912 .

= = = British Mandate = = =

Haifa was captured from the Ottomans in September 1918 by Indian horsemen of the British Army after overrunning Ottoman positions armed with spears and swords . On 22 September , British troops were heading to Nazareth when a reconnaissance report was received indicating that the Turks were leaving Haifa . The British made preparations to enter the city and came under fire in the Balad al @-@ Sheikh district ( today Nesher ) . After the British regrouped , an elite unit of Indian horsemen were sent to attack the Turkish positions on the flanks and overrun their artillery guns on Mount Carmel .

Under the British Mandate , Haifa became an industrial port city . The Bahá 'í Faith in 1918 and today has its administrative and spiritual centre in the environs of Haifa . Over the next few decades the number of Jews increased steadily , due to immigration , especially from Europe . The Arab immigration on the other hand swelled by influx of Arabs , coming mainly from surrounding villages as well as Syrian Hauran . The Arab immigration mainly came as a result of prices and salary drop . Between the censuses of 1922 and 1931 , the Muslim , Jewish , and Christian populations rose by 217 % , 256 % , and 156 % , respectively .

Haifa 's development owed much to British plans to make it a central port and hub for Middle @-@ East crude oil . The British Government of Palestine developed the port and built refineries , thereby facilitating the rapid development of the city as a center for the country 's heavy industries . Haifa was also among the first towns to be fully electrified . The Palestine Electric Company inaugurated the Haifa Electrical Power Station already in 1925 , opening the door to considerable industrialization . The State @-@ run Palestine Railways also built its main workshops in Haifa .

By 1945 the population had shifted to 33 percent Muslim , 20 percent Christian and 47 percent Jewish . In 1947 , about 70 @,@ 910 Arabs ( 41 @,@ 000 Muslims , 29 @,@ 910 Christians ) and 74 @,@ 230 Jews were living there . The Christian community were mostly Greek @-@ Melkite Catholics .

The 1947 UN Partition Plan in late November 1947 designated Haifa as part of the proposed Jewish state . Arab protests over that decision evolved into violence between Jews and Arabs that left several dozen people dead during December . On 30 December 1947 , members of the Irgun , a Jewish underground militia , threw bombs into a crowd of Arabs outside the gates of the Consolidated Refineries in Haifa , killing six and injuring 42 . In response Arab employees of the company killed 39 Jewish employees in what became known as the Haifa Oil Refinery massacre . The Jewish Haganah militia retaliated with a raid on the Arab village of Balad al @-@ Shaykh , where many of the Arab refinery workers lived , in what became known as the Balad al @-@ Shaykh massacre . Control of Haifa was critical in the ensuing civil war , since it was the major industrial and oil refinery port in British Palestine .

British forces in Haifa redeployed on 21 April 1948 , withdrawing from most of the city while still maintaining control over the port facilities . Two days later the downtown , controlled by a combination of local and foreign ( ALA ) Arab irregulars was assaulted by Jewish forces in Operation Bi 'ur Hametz , by the Carmeli Brigade of the Haganah , commanded by Moshe Carmel . The operation led to a massive displacement of Haifa 's Arab population . According to The Economist at the time , only 5 @,@ 000 ? 6 @,@ 000 of the city 's 62 @,@ 000 Arabs remained there by 2 October 1948 .

Contemporaneous sources emphasized the Jewish leadership 's attempt to stop the Arab exodus from the city and the Arab leadership as a motivating factor in the refugees ' flight . According to the British district superintendent of police , " Every effort is being made by the Jews to persuade the Arab populace to stay and carry on with their normal lives , to get their shops and business open and to be assured that their lives and interests will be safe . " Time Magazine wrote on 3 May 1948 :

The mass evacuation , prompted partly by fear , partly by orders of Arab leaders , left the Arab quarter of Haifa a ghost city ... By withdrawing Arab workers their leaders hoped to paralyze Haifa .

Benny Morris said Haifa 's Arabs left due to of a combination of Zionist threats and encouragement to do so by Arab leaders . Ilan Pappé writes that the shelling culminated in an attack on a Palestinian crowd in the old marketplace using three 60 mm ( 76 mm ) mortars on 22 April 1948 . Shabtai Levy , the Mayor of the city , and some other Jewish leaders urged Arabs not to leave . According to Ilan Pappé , Jewish loudspeakers could be heard in the city ordering Arab residents to leave " before it 's too late . " Morris quotes British sources as stating that during the battles between 22 and 23 April 100 Arabs were killed and 100 wounded , but he adds that the total may have been higher .

= = = State of Israel = = =

After the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel on 14 May 1948 Haifa became the gateway for Jewish immigration into Israel . During the 1948 Arab ? Israeli War , the neighborhoods of Haifa were sometimes contested . After the war , Jewish immigrants were settled in new neighborhoods , among them Kiryat Hayim , Ramot Remez , Ramat Shaul , Kiryat Sprinzak , and Kiryat Eliezer . Bnei Zion Hospital ( formerly Rothschild Hospital ) and the Central Synagogue in Hadar Hacarmel date from this period . In 1953 , a master plan was created for transportation and the future architectural layout .

In 1959 , a group of Sephardi and Mizrahi Jews , mostly Moroccan Jews , rioted in Wadi Salib , claiming the state was discriminating against them . Their demand for ? bread and work ? was directed at the state institutions and what they viewed as an Ashkenazi elite in the Labor Party and the Histadrut .

Tel Aviv gained in status , while Haifa suffered a decline in the role as regional capital . The opening of Ashdod as a port exacerbated this . Tourism shrank when the Israeli Ministry of Tourism placed emphasis on developing Tiberias as a tourist centre .

Nevertheless , Haifa 's population had reached 200 @, @ 000 by the early 1970s , and mass immigration from the former Soviet Union boosted the population by a further 35 @, @ 000 .

Many of Wadi Salib 's historic Ottoman buildings have now been demolished , and in the 1990s a major section of the Old City was razed to make way for a new municipal center .

From 1999 to 2003 , several Palestinian suicide attacks took place in Haifa ( in Maxim and Matza restaurants , bus 37 , and others ) , killing 68 civilians .

In 2006 , Haifa was hit by 93 Hezbollah rockets during the Second Lebanon War , killing 11 civilians and leading to half of the city 's population fleeing at the end of the first week of the war . Among the places hit by rockets were a train depot and the oil refinery complex .

= = Demographics = =

Haifa is Israel 's third @-@ largest city , consisting of 103 @, @ 000 households , or a population of 266 @, @ 300 . Immigrants from the former Soviet Union constitute 25 % of Haifa 's population . According to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics , Israeli Arabs constitute 10 % of Haifa 's population , the majority living in Wadi Nisnas , Abbas and Halissa neighborhoods .

Haifa is commonly portrayed as a model of co @-@ existence between Arabs and Jews , although tensions and hostility do still exist .

Between 1994 and 2009 , the city had a declining and aging population compared to Tel Aviv and Jerusalem , as young people moved to the center of the country for education and jobs , while young families migrated to bedroom communities in the suburbs . However , as a result of new projects and improving infrastructure , the city managed to reverse its population decline , reducing emigration while attracting more internal migration into the city . In 2009 , positive net immigration into the city was shown for the first time in 15 years .

= = = Religious and ethnic communities = = =

The population is heterogeneous . Jews comprise some 82 % of the population , almost 14 % are

Christians ( the majority of whom are Arab Christians ) and , some 4 % are Muslims ( of which many are Ahmadis ) . Haifa also includes Druze and Bahá'í communities . In 2006 , 27 % of the Arab population was aged 14 and under , compared to 17 % of the Jewish and other population groups . The trend continues in the age 15 @-@ 29 group , in which 27 % of the Arab population is found , and the age 30 @-@ 44 group ( 23 % ) . The population of Jews and others in these age groups are 22 % and 18 % respectively . Nineteen percent of the city 's Jewish and other population is between 45 and 59 , compared to 14 % of the Arab population . This continues with 14 % of Jews and others aged 60 ? 74 and 10 % over age 75 , in comparison to 7 % and just 2 % respectively in the Arab population .

In 2006 , 2 @.@ 9 % of the Jews in the city were Haredi , compared to 7 @.@ 5 % on a national scale . However , the Haredi community in Haifa is growing fast due to a high fertility rate . 66 @.@ 6 % were secular , compared to a national average of 43 @.@ 7 % . A significant portion of the immigrants from the former Soviet Union either lack official religious @-@ ethnic classification or are Non @-@ Jews as they are from mixed @-@ marriage families of some Jewish origin . There is also a Scandinavian Seamen Protestant church , established by Norwegian Righteous Among the Nations pastor Per Faye @-@ Hansen .

Haifa is the center of liberal Palestinian culture , as it was under British colonial rule . The Palestinian neighborhoods , which are mixed Muslim and Christian , are in the lowlands near the sea while Jewish neighborhoods are at higher elevation . An active Palestinian cultural life has developed in the 21st century .

#### = = Geography = =

Haifa is situated on the Israeli Mediterranean Coastal Plain , the historic land bridge between Europe , Africa , and Asia , and the mouth of the Kishon River . Located on the northern slopes of Mount Carmel and around Haifa Bay , the city is split over three tiers . The lowest is the center of commerce and industry including the Port of Haifa . The middle level is on the slopes of Mount Carmel and consists of older residential neighborhoods , while the upper level consists of modern neighborhoods looking over the lower tiers . From here views can be had across the Western Galilee region of Israel towards Rosh HaNikra and the Lebanese border . Haifa is about 90 kilometers ( 55 @.@ 9 mi ) north of the city of Tel Aviv , and has a large number of beaches on the Mediterranean .

#### = = Flora and fauna = =

The Carmel Mountain has three main wadis : Lotem , Amik and Si ? ach . For the most part these valleys are undeveloped natural corridors that run up through the city from the coast to the top of the mountain . Marked hiking paths traverse these areas and they provide habitat for wildlife such as wild boar , golden jackal , hyrax , Egyptian mongoose , owls and chameleons .

#### = = Climate = =

Haifa has a hot @-@ summer Mediterranean climate with hot , dry summers and cool , rainy winters ( Köppen climate classification Csa ) . Spring arrives in March when temperatures begin to increase . By late May , the temperature has warmed up considerably to herald warm summer days . The average temperature in summer is 26 ° C ( 79 ° F ) and in winter , 12 ° C ( 54 ° F ) . Snow is rare in Haifa , but temperatures around 3 ° C ( 37 ° F ) can sometimes occur , usually in the early morning . Humidity tends to be high all year round , and rain usually occurs between September and May . Annual precipitation is approximately 629 millimeters ( 25 in ) .

#### = = Neighborhoods = =

Haifa has developed in tiers , from the lower to the upper city on the Carmel . The oldest

neighborhood in the modern Haifa is Wadi Salib , the Old City center near the port , which has been bisected by a major road and razed in part to make way for government buildings . Wadi Salib stretches across to Wadi Nisnas , the center of Arab life in Haifa today . In the 19th century , under Ottoman rule , the German Colony was built , providing the first model of urban planning in Haifa . Some of the buildings have been restored and the colony has turned into a center of Haifa nightlife .

The first buildings in Hadar were constructed at the start of the 20th century . Hadar was Haifa 's cultural center and marketplace throughout the 1920s and into the 1980s , nestled above and around the Haifa 's Arab neighborhoods . Today Hadar stretches from the port area near the bay , approximately halfway up Mount Carmel , around the German Colony , Wadi Nisnas and Wadi Salib . Hadar houses two commercial centers ( one in the port area , and one midway up the mountain ) surrounded by some of the city 's older neighborhoods .

Neve Sha 'anan , a neighborhood located on the second tier of Mount Carmel , was founded in the 1920s . West of the port are the neighborhoods of Bat Galim , Shikmona Beach , and Kiryat Eliezer . To the west and east of Hadar are the Arab neighborhoods of Abbas and Khalisa , built in the 1960s and 70s . To the south of Mount Carmel 's headland , along the road to Tel Aviv , are the neighborhoods of Ein HaYam , Shaar HaAliya , Kiryat Sprinzak and Neve David .

Above Hadar are affluent neighborhoods such as the Carmel Tzarfati ( French Carmel ) , Merkaz Ha 'Carmel , Romema , Ahuzat Ha 'Carmel ( Ahuza ) , Carmeliya , Vardiya , Ramat Golda , Ramat Alon and Hod Ha 'Carmel ( Denya ) . While there are general divisions between Arab and Jewish neighborhoods , there is an increasing trend for wealthy Arabs to move into affluent Jewish neighborhoods . Another of the Carmel neighborhoods is Kababir , home to the National Headquarters of Israel 's Ahmadiyya Muslim Community ; located near Merkaz HaCarmel and overlooking the coast .

= = Urban development = =

Recently , residential construction has been concentrated around Kiryat Haim and Kiryat Shmuel , with 75 @, @ 000 m2 ( 807 @, @ 293 sq ft ) of new residential construction between 2002 ? 2004 , the Carmel , with 70 @, @ 000 m2 ( 753 @, @ 474 sq ft ) , and Ramot Neve Sha 'anan with approximately 70 @, @ 000 m2 ( 753 @, @ 474 sq ft ) Non @-@ residential construction was highest in the Lower Town , ( 90 @, @ 000 sq m ) , Haifa Bay ( 72 @, @ 000 sq m ) and Ramot Neve Sha 'anan ( 54 @, @ 000 sq m ) . In 2004 , 80 % of construction in the city was private .

Currently , the city has a modest number of skyscrapers and high @-@ rise buildings , and many additional high @-@ rise buildings are planned , have been approved , or are under construction . Though buildings rising up to 20 stories were built on Mount Carmel in the past , the Haifa municipality banned the construction of any new buildings taller than nine stories on Mount Carmel in July 2012 .

The neighborhood of Wadi Salib , located in the heart of downtown Haifa , is being redeveloped . Most of its Jewish and Arab residents are considered squatters and have been gradually evicted over the years . The Haifa Economic Corporation Ltd is developing two 1 @, @ 000 square meter lots for office and commercial use . Some historic buildings have been renovated and redeveloped , especially into nightclubs and theaters , such as the Palace of the Pasha , a Turkish bathhouse , and a Middle Eastern music and dance club , which has been converted into theaters and offices .

In 2012 , a new , massive development plan was announced for Haifa 's waterfront . According to the plan , the western section of the city 's port will be torn down , and all port activity will be moved to the east . The west side of the port will be transformed into a tourism and nightlife center and a point of embarkation and arrival for sea travel through the construction of public spaces , a beach promenade , and the renovation of commercial buildings . The train tracks that currently bisect the city and separate the city 's beach from the rest of Haifa will also be buried . A park will be developed on the border of the Kishon River , the refineries ' cooling towers will be turned into a visitors ' center , and bridges will lead from the port to the rest of the city . Massive renovations are also currently underway in Haifa 's lower town , in the Turkish market and Paris Square , which will become the city 's business center . In addition , the ammonia depository tank in the Haifa bay

industrial zone will be dismantled , and a new one built in an alternative location .

Another plan seeks to turn the western section of Haifa Port into a major tourism and nightlife center , as well as a functioning point of embarkation and arrival for sea travel . All port activity will be moved to the western side , and the area will be redeveloped . Public spaces and a beach promenade will be developed , and commercial buildings will be renovated .

As part of the development plans , the Israeli Navy , which has a large presence in Haifa , will withdraw from the shoreline between Bat Galim and Hof Hashaket . A 5 @-@ kilometer ( 3 @.@ 1 @-@ mile ) long esplanade which will encircle the shoreline will be constructed . It will include a bicycle path , and possibly also a small bridge under which navy vessels will pass on their way to the sea .

In addition , a 50 @,@ 000 square @-@ meter entertainment complex that will contain a Disney theme park , cinemas , shops , and a 25 @-@ screen Multiplex theater will be built at the Check Post exit from the Carmel Tunnels .

In 2014 , a new major plan for the city was proposed , under which extensive development of residential , business , and leisure areas will take place with the target of increasing the city 's population by 60 @,@ 000 by 2025 . Under the plan , five new neighborhoods will be built , along with new high @-@ tech parks . In addition , existing employment centers will be renovated , and new leisure areas and a large park will be built .

= = Economy = =

The common Israeli saying , " Haifa works , Jerusalem prays , and Tel Aviv plays " attests to Haifa 's reputation as a city of workers and industry . The industrial region of Haifa is in the eastern part of the city , around the Kishon River . It is home to the Haifa oil refinery , one of the two oil refineries in Israel ( the other refinery being located in Ashdod ) . The Haifa refinery processes 9 million tons ( 66 million barrels ) of crude oil a year . Its nowadays unused twin 80 @-@ meter high cooling towers , built in the 1930s , were the tallest buildings built in the British Mandate period .

Matam ( short for Merkaz Ta 'asiyot Mada - Scientific Industries Center ) , the largest and oldest business park in Israel , is at the southern entrance to the city , hosting manufacturing and R & D facilities for a large number of Israeli and international hi @-@ tech companies , such as Intel , IBM , Microsoft , Motorola , Google , Yahoo ! , Elbit , CSR , Philips , and Amdocs . The campus of the University of Haifa is also home to IBM Haifa Labs .

The Port of Haifa is the leader in passenger traffic among Israeli ports , and is also a major cargo harbor , although deregulation has seen its dominance challenged by the Port of Ashdod .

Haifa malls and shopping centers include Hutsot Hamifratz , Horev Center Mall , Panorama Center , Castra Center , Colony Center ( Lev HaMoshava ) , Hanevi 'im Tower Mall , Kanyon Haifa , Lev Hamifratz Mall and Grand Kanyon .

In 2010 , Monocle magazine identified Haifa as the city with the most promising business potential , with the greatest investment opportunities in the world . The magazine noted that " a massive head @-@ to @-@ toe regeneration is starting to have an impact ; from scaffolding and cranes around town , to renovated façades and new smart places to eat " . The Haifa municipality had spent more than \$ 350 million on roads and infrastructure , and the number of building permits had risen 83 % in the previous two years .

In 2014 , it was announced that a technology @-@ focused stock exchange would be established to compete with the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange .

Currently , some 40 hotels , mostly boutique hotels , are planned , have been approved , or are under construction . The Haifa Municipality is seeking to turn the city into Northern Israel 's tourist center , from where travelers can embark on day trips into Acre , Nazareth , Tiberias , and the Galilee .

A new life sciences industrial park containing five buildings with 85 @,@ 000 square meters of space on a 31 @-@ duman ( 7 @.@ 75 acre ) site is being built adjacent to the Matam industrial park .



## === Tourism ===

In 2005 , Haifa has 13 hotels with a total of 1 @, @ 462 rooms . The city has a 17 kilometres ( 11 mi ) shoreline , of which 5 kilometres ( 3 mi ) are beaches . Haifa 's main tourist attraction is the Bahá 'í World Centre , with the golden @-@ domed Shrine of the Báb and the surrounding gardens . Between 2005 and 2006 , 86 @, @ 037 visited the shrine . In 2008 , the Bahá 'í gardens were designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site . The restored German Colony , founded by the Templers , Stella Maris and Elijah 's Cave also draw many tourists .

Located in the Haifa district are the Ein Hod artists ' colony , where over 90 artists and craftsmen have studios and exhibitions , and the Mount Carmel national park , with caves where Neanderthal and early Homo Sapiens remains were found .

A 2007 report commissioned by the Haifa Municipality calls for the construction of more hotels , a ferry line between Haifa , Acre and Caesarea , development of the western anchorage of the port as a recreation and entertainment area , and an expansion of the local airport and port to accommodate international travel and cruise ships .

## == Arts and culture ==

Despite its image as a port and industrial city , Haifa is the cultural hub of northern Israel . During the 1950s , mayor Abba Hushi made a special effort to encourage authors and poets to move to the city , and founded the Haifa Theatre , a repertory theater , the first municipal theater founded in the country . The principal Arabic theater servicing the northern Arab population is the al @-@ Midan Theater . Other theaters in the city include the Krieger Centre for the Performing Arts and the Rappaport Art and Culture Center . The Congress Center hosts exhibitions , concerts and special events .

The New Haifa Symphony Orchestra , established in 1950 , has more than 5 @, @ 000 subscribers . In 2004 , 49 @, @ 000 people attended its concerts . The Haifa Cinematheque , founded in 1975 , hosts the annual Haifa International Film Festival during the intermediate days of the Sukkot holiday . Haifa has 29 movie theaters . The city publishes a local newspaper , Yediot Haifa , and has its own radio station , Radio Haifa .

During the 1990s , Haifa hosted the Haifa Rock & Blues Festival featuring Bob Dylan , Nick Cave , Blur and PJ Harvey . The last festival was held in 1995 with Sheryl Crow , Suede and Faith No More as headliners .

## === Museums ===

Haifa has over a dozen museums . The most popular museum is the Israel National Museum of Science , Technology , and Space , which recorded almost 150 @, @ 000 visitors in 2004 . The museum is located in the historic Technion building in the Hadar neighborhood . The Haifa Museum of Art houses a collection of modern and classical art , as well as displays on the history of Haifa . The Tikotin Museum of Japanese Art is the only museum in the Middle East dedicated solely to Japanese art . Other museums in Haifa include the Museum of Prehistory , the National Maritime Museum and Haifa City Museum , the Hecht Museum , the Dagon Archaeological Museum of Grain Handling , the Railway Museum , the Clandestine Immigration and Navy Museum , the Israeli Oil Industry Museum , and Chagall Artists ' House . As part of his campaign to bring culture to Haifa , Mayor Abba Hushi provided the artist Mane @-@ Katz with a building on Mount Carmel to house his collection of Judaica , which is now a museum . The Haifa Educational Zoo at Gan HaEm park houses a small animal collection including Syrian brown bears , now extinct from Israel . Within the zoo is the Pinhas House biology institute . In the close vicinity of Haifa , on the Carmel , the Northern " Hai @-@ Bar " ( " wild life " ) operated by Israel 's Parks and Reserves Authority for the purpose of breeding and reintroduction of species now extinct from Israel , such as Persian Fallow Deer .

## == Government ==

As an industrial port city , Haifa has traditionally been a Labor party stronghold . The strong presence of dock workers and trade unions earned it the nickname ' Red Haifa . ' In addition , many prominent Arabs in the Israeli Communist Party , among them Tawfik Toubi , Emile Habibi , Zahi Karkabi , Bulus Farah and Emile Toma , were from Haifa .

In recent years , there has been a drift toward the center . This was best signified by , in the 2006 legislative elections , the Kadima party receiving about 28 % of the votes in Haifa , and Labor lagging behind with 16 % .

Before 1948 , Haifa 's Municipality was fairly unusual as it developed cooperation between the mixed Arab and Jewish community in the city , with representatives of both groups involved in the city 's management . Under mayor al - Haj , between 1920 and 1927 , the city council had six Arab and two Jewish representatives , with the city run as a mixed municipality with overall Arab control . Greater cooperation was introduced under Hasan Bey Shukri , who adopted a positive and conciliatory attitude toward the city 's Jews and gave them senior posts in the municipality . In 1940 , the first Jewish mayor , Shabtai Levy , was elected . Levy 's two deputies were Arab ( one Muslim , the other Christian ) , with the remainder of the council made up of four Jews and six Arabs .

Today , Haifa is governed by its 12th city council , headed by the mayor Yona Yahav . The results of municipal elections decide on the makeup of the council , similarly to the Knesset elections . The city council is the legislative council in the city , and has the authority to pass auxiliary laws . The 12th council , which was elected in 2003 , has 31 members , with the liberal Shinui - Greens ticket holding the most seats ( 6 ) , and Likud coming second with 5 . Many of the decisions passed by the city council are results of recommendation made by the various municipal committees , which are committees where non - municipal organs meet with representatives from the city council . Some committees are spontaneous , but some are mandatory , such as the security committee , tender committee and financial committee .

= = = Mayors = = =

= = Medical facilities = =

Haifa medical facilities have a total of 4 ,000 hospital beds . The largest hospital is the government - operated Rambam Hospital with 900 beds and 78 ,000 admissions in 2004 . Bnai Zion Hospital and Carmel Hospital each have 400 beds . Other hospitals in the city include the Italian Hospital , Elisha Hospital ( 100 beds ) , Horev Medical Center ( 36 beds ) and Ramat Marpe ( 18 beds ) . Haifa has 20 family health centers . In 2004 , there were a total of 177 ,478 hospital admissions .

Rambam Medical Center was in the direct line of fire during the Second Lebanon War in 2006 and was forced to take special precautions to protect its patients . Whole wings of the hospital were moved to large underground shelters .

= = Education = =

Haifa is home to two internationally acclaimed universities and several colleges The University of Haifa , founded in 1963 , is at the top of Mt . Carmel . The campus was designed by the architect of Brasília and United Nations Headquarters in New York , Oscar Niemeyer . The top floor of the 30 - story Eshkol Tower provides a panoramic view of northern Israel . The Hecht Museum , with important archeology and art collections , is on the campus of Haifa University .

The Technion - Israel Institute of Technology , described as Israel 's MIT , was founded in 1912 . It has 18 faculties and 42 research institutes . The original building now houses Haifa 's science museum . The Hebrew Reali School was founded in 1913 . It is the largest k - 12 school in Israel , with 4 ,000 students in 7 branches , all over the city . The first technological high school in Israel , Bosmat , was established in Haifa in 1933 .

Other academic institutions in Haifa are the Gordon College of Education and Sha'anani Religious Teachers' College, the WIZO Haifa Academy of Design and Education, and Tiltan College of Design. The Michlala Leminhall College of Management and the Open University of Israel have branches in Haifa. The city also has a nursing college and the P.E.T Practical Engineering School.

As of 2006-07, Haifa had 70 elementary schools, 23 middle schools, 28 academic high schools and 8 vocational high schools. There were 5,133 pupils in municipal kindergartens, 20,081 in elementary schools, 7,911 in middle schools, 8,072 in academic high schools, 2,646 in vocational high schools, and 2,068 in comprehensive district high schools. 86% of the students attended Hebrew-speaking schools and 14% attended Arab schools. 5% were in special education. In 2004, Haifa had 16 municipal libraries stocking 367,323 books.

Two prestigious Arab schools in Haifa are the Orthodox School, run by the Greek Orthodox church, and the Nazareth Nuns' School, a Catholic institution.

== Transportation ==

Haifa is served by six railway stations and the Carmelit, currently Israel's only subway system (another is under construction in Tel Aviv). The Nahariya-Tel Aviv Coastal Railway main line of Israel Railways runs along the coast of the Gulf of Haifa and has six stations within the city. From south-west to north-east, these stations are: Haifa Hof HaCarmel, Haifa Bat Galim, Haifa Merkaz HaShmona, Lev HaMifratz, Hutzot HaMifratz and Kiryat Haim. Together with the Kiryat Motzkin Railway Station in the northern suburb Kiryat Motzkin, they form the Haifa-Krayot suburban line ("Parvarit"). There are direct trains from Haifa to Tel Aviv, Ben Gurion International Airport, Nahariya, Akko, Kiryat Motzkin, Binyamina, Lod, Ramla, Beit Shemesh, Jerusalem and other locations, but all trains to Beersheba skip all Haifa stations.

Haifa's intercity bus connections are operated almost exclusively by the Egged bus company, which operates two terminals:

HaMifratz Central Bus Station, adjacent to the Lev HaMifratz Railway Station

Haifa Hof HaCarmel Central Bus Station, adjacent to the Hof HaCarmel Railway Station

Lines to the North of the country use HaMifratz Central Bus Station and their coverage includes most towns in the North of Israel. Lines heading south use Haifa Hof HaCarmel Central Bus Station.

Destinations directly reachable from Hof HaCarmel CBS include Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Eilat, Raanana, Netanya, Hadera, Zikhron Ya'akov, Atlit, Tirat Carmel, Ben Gurion International Airport and intermediate communities. There are also three Egged lines that have their terminus in the Ramat Vizhnitz neighborhood and run to Jerusalem, Bnei Brak and Ashdod. These used to be "mehadrin" (i.e. gender segregated) lines.

All urban lines are run by Egged. There are also share taxis that run along some bus routes but do not have an official schedule. In 2006, Haifa implemented a trial network of neighborhood mini-buses named "Shkhunatit" and run by Egged. In December 2012, GetTaxi, an app and taxi service which allows users to hail a cab using their smartphone without contacting the taxi station by identifying and summoning the closest taxi. In the current initial phase, 50 taxis from the service are operating in Haifa.

Haifa and the Krayot suburbs also have a new Phileas concept bus rapid transit system called the Metronit. These buses, operating with hybrid engines, follow optical strips embedded in designated lanes of roads, providing tram-like public transportation services. The Metronit consists of 100-180 meter buses, each with the capacity for 150 passengers, operating along 40 km (25 mi) of designated roadways. The new system officially opened on 16 August 2013 serving three lines.

Haifa is one of the few cities in Israel where buses operate on Shabbat. Bus lines operate throughout the city on a reduced schedule from late Saturday morning onwards, and also connect Haifa with Nesher, Tirat Karmel, Yokneam, Nazareth, Nazareth Illit and intermediate communities. Since the summer of 2008, night buses are operated by Egged in Haifa (line 200) and the Krayot suburbs (line 210). During the summer of 2008 these lines operated 7 nights a week. During the

winter their schedule is limited to Thursday , Friday and Saturday nights , making them the only buses in Israel to operate on Friday night . Haifa is also the only city in Israel to operate a Saturday bus service to the beaches during summer time . Egged lines run during Saturday mornings from many neighborhoods to the Dado and Bat Galim beaches , and back in the afternoon .

The Haifa underground railway system is called Carmelit . It is a subterranean funicular on rails , running from downtown Paris Square to Gan HaEm ( Mother 's Park ) on Mount Carmel . With a single track , six stations and two trains , it is listed in Guinness World Records as the world 's shortest metro line . The Carmelit accommodates bicycles .

Haifa also has a cable car . The Haifa Cable Car gondola lift consists of six cabins and connects Bat Galim on the coast to the Stella Maris observation deck and monastery atop Mount Carmel . It serves mainly tourists . There are currently plans to add a 4 @. @ 4 kilometre commuter cable car service to Haifa 's public transport system , running from HaMifratz Central Bus Station at the foot of Mount Carmel to the Technion , and then to the University of Haifa .

= = = Air and sea transport = = =

Haifa Airport serves domestic flights to Tel Aviv and Eilat as well as international charters to Cyprus , Greece and Jordan . The airlines that operates flights from Haifa are Arkia and Israir . There are currently plans to expand services from Haifa . Cruise ships operate from Haifa port primarily to destinations in the Eastern Mediterranean , Southern Europe and Black Sea .

= = = Roads = = =

Travel between Haifa and the center of the country is possible by road with Highway 2 , the main highway along the coastal plain , beginning at Tel Aviv and ending at Haifa . Furthermore , Highway 4 runs along the coast to the north of Haifa , as well as south , inland from Highway 2 . In the past , traffic along Highway 2 to the north of Haifa had to pass through the downtown area of the city ; the Carmel Tunnels , opened for traffic 1 December 2010 , now route this traffic under Mount Carmel , reducing congestion in the downtown area .

= = Sports = =

The main stadiums in Haifa are the 14 @, @ 002 @- @ seat Kiryat Eliezer Stadium and Thomas D 'Alesandro Stadium . Neve Sha 'anan Athletic Stadium seats 1 @, @ 000 . Construction of the Sammy Ofer Stadium , a UEFA @- @ approved 30 @, @ 820 seat stadium was completed in 2014 .

The city 's two main football clubs are Maccabi Haifa and Hapoel Haifa who both currently play in the Israeli Premier League and share the Sammy Ofer Stadium as their home pitch . Maccabi has won twelve Israeli titles , while Hapoel has won one .

The city also has an American football club , the Haifa Underdogs , that are a part of the Israeli Football League and play in Yoqneam Stadium . The team lost in the championship game of the league 's inaugural season , but won one title as part of American Football Israel , which merged with the Israeli Football League in 2005 .

The city has several clubs in the regional leagues , including Beitar Haifa in Liga Bet ( the fourth tier ) and Hapoel Ahva Haifa , F.C. Haifa Ruby Shapira and Maccabi Neve Sha 'anan Eldad in Liga Gimel ( the fifth tier ) .

Haifa has a professional basketball club , Maccabi Haifa . Maccabi Haifa was recently promoted to Israeli Basketball Super League , the top division . The team plays at Romema Arena , which seats 5 @, @ 000 .

The Haifa Hawks are an ice hockey team based out of the city of Haifa . They participate in the Israeli League , the top level of Israeli ice hockey .

In 1996 , the city hosted the World Windsurfing Championship . The Haifa Tennis Club , near the southwest entrance to the city , is one of the largest in Israel . John Shecter , Olympic horse breeder and owner of triple cup champion Shergar was born here .

= = Twin towns - sister cities = =

Haifa is twinned with the following cities :