



الأَرْشِيفُ

IZA EL NEMS 2026 ©

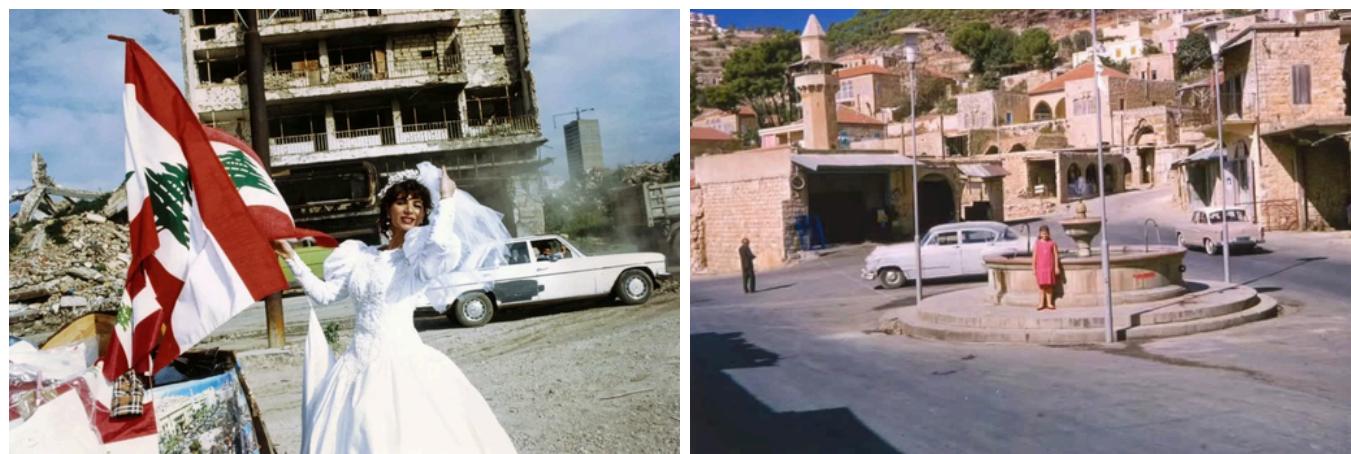
Asal 'A Albi — A Surreal Family Portrait Through
the Villa by / Iza El Nems

creative direction

(concept overview)

internal use only

Beirut, Lebanon | for Middle East Archive



(pg 1)

a surreal, slow-moving portrait of a family inside a villa in beirut. the camera becomes a quiet observer, drifting through rituals of daily life—fruit picking, cooking, smoking, dressing, etc. the film moves like a memory. intimate, voyeuristic, editorial.

internal use only

vision and narrative created + directed by
iza el nems.



Concept Overview —

a surreal, slow-moving family portrait set in a villa in beirut—a deconstructed home video reimagined through the lens of iza el nems. the camera becomes a quiet observer, gliding through rooms and terraces, revealing everyday rituals (fruit picking, cooking, smoking, resting, dancing, eating) staged like a living family photo. each person wears clothing not as costume, but as second skin—a quiet part of their identity, folded into a narrative of nostalgia / observational intimacy. it's voyeuristic, dreamlike, and emotionally grounded in place.

camera moves like a memory—gliding past an uncle and niece picking fruit in the garden, drifting up the stairs and around the bend through the kitchen where teta is cooking, up to the terrace where two men are immersed deep in conversation, smoking. each moment feels found, not staged.

through cinematic portraiture, this campaign evokes the emotional depth of both classical and contemporary art. it's more than just a celebration of fashion—it's a sensory, visual journey that honors the richness of lebanese culture through the art of photography.

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Visual Language / Lighting —

Visual Tone

in beirut, home holds many layers—slipping between memory and performance, myth and routine. fashion lives in that in-between, where the ordinary is tinged with the surreal and glamor and grit quietly coexist. 'asal 'a albi is a nonlinear narrative fashion film—told through a series of emotional vignettes that build connection through atmosphere, not plot. it plays like a home video, but editorial in feel—soft, surreal, voyeuristic, intimate. the house becomes a living, breathing photograph.

Camera

camera floats, steady and low. slow-moving and curious, peeking around corners, listening, floating through rooms like a memory.

Choreography

movement feels unplanned despite subtle choreography (*like a dance of real life*). moments unfold naturally, but are choreographed with intention.

Lighting

soft, natural light mixed with strong directional shadows / contrasts. interplay between light and dark work towards bold visuals and give dramatic visual impact. lighting tells a story (desire, mystery, tension, romance). highlights the subject within the composition — feels otherworldly.

slightly off-timing—like a dream that lingers.



Personal Context —

asal 'a albi is rooted in my family's villa in beirut—a house with no address, mapped out through memory, not street names. like most homes here, it carries layers: beauty and war, tradition and illusion, etc.

when i see that house, i think of it as a castle, standing strong, unwavering, similar to my ideas of what lebanon is. the design of the metal of its big black fence, swirling in and out only to come together in the center, the burnt orange color of its exterior, the garden and its many pink and purple flowers—it reads like a story-book. and when you walk upstairs, its evident how the inside is burnt too, decomposing with its lack of functioning drains and electricity, sticky marble floors, cracks in the wall—all invisible to the guests we invite over, host downstairs among the beautiful pink and purple flowers and crystal clean white marble floors.

as i slip off my shoes, i catch the vase antoine placed in front of the bomb's imprint —bright, defiant, hiding the wound beneath. i slide the curtains teta won't let go of and step out onto the balcony. there is an ability like no other that we have as lebanese, that is to swallow up the ugly, to hold the unbearable in our chests and still make it sing.

the inside of my family's villa is war torn, exhausted by the lives and stories of generations of children and grandchildren, hidden shiite and sunni refugees, yet somehow, it gathers what's broken and renders it meaningful—grief arranged like furniture, beauty stitched into the damage. they show what they love, conceal what unsettles them—but nothing is ever discarded. its memories lie in the layers of paint on the wall and scores of eccentric dinnerware staged to cover what time left behind.

there's depth to disaster. when you enter my family's home, you can see what used to be and what was lost. what is now and what will be. may its future echo: what holds meaning lasts, even when it changes.

i walk to the sink and dunk my head in, letting the cold water fill my ears and soak my scalp. i wet my thick straight hair, until each curl is let loose again. dripping wet, hair bouncing up and down, i move the vase to the right, making visible the blackened wound left behind. ill put it back later tonight, when the guests arrive.

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MIDDLE EAST ARCHIVE . a visual presentation



asal 'a albi is a reflection of the villa, drifting through rooms, catching quiet rituals. its story moves past fashion, towards what gets shown and what stays hidden. each scene unveils a moment of intimate reflection. beauty, like the house, endures—shaped by what it's carried, not diminished by it. *lebanon's layered history and lived-in beauty shape this concept—a dreamlike portrait of home where imagery becomes the vessel—carrying the weight of what's endured and the grace of how we move through it.* it invites interpretation, drawing the audience into the unspoken, untold stories behind every expression.

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Narrative Flow —

through the house the film unfolds as one long tracking shot. a family portrait in fragments found in moments like:

- uncle + niece pick fruit beneath the tree
- kitchen: someone cooks, apron over pressed skirt suite
- stairs: camera glides past details, overhears conversations
- terrace: two men smoke quietly
- dining room: family eating dinner, maybe turns to dancing
- *other*: auntie lounges by the pool
- balcony: a last moment of stillness, something beautiful gives way to what lies beneath. a final breath—something is uncovered, as if the house speaks

sensory richness: camera picks up on strange patterns—the cheetah's spots, a porcelain statue that lounges by the balcony, feathered paisleys on worn couches, hundreds of striped, polka-dotted and flowered dinner pieces that don't match but somehow belong. it catches beauty in motion too: that flow into the heads of straightened long black hair, painted faces, sparkled lashes over big brown arab eyes. it's plumped into large red lips and larger breasts, elongated into the six-inch heels worn to breakfast.

the patterns, textures + mismatched objects ground the villa in specificity—it feels lived-in, emotional, real. this detail is essential to the film's setting in beirut, where domestic life is layered, surreal + full of quiet contradictions. the visuals build tension between glamour / chaos, and reflect how style, ritual + identity are inherited, performed, and adorned—echoing the role we all play in this world.

in one standout shot, an arab woman reclines on a velvet sofa, bathed in soft, ambient lighting that highlights her regal presence—a nod to historical portraiture. her body is completely still; the only movement in the frame is her mouth as she speaks to someone on the phone. her reflections are in arabic, left untranslated, inviting the viewer to feel the emotional depth of her words. the language component elevates the visuals, resonating across cultures and time.

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Middle East Archive — *Why This Works*

it's deeply personal, regionally grounded, and subverts the fashion editorial format. it's not trend chasing—it's emotional storytelling that interrogates cultural codes. this story reimagines what "street" photography can be—personal, regional, cinematic. a dreamlike portrait of arab identity, seen through ritual and style.

it ties into the brand's obsession with tension—uniform vs individuality, beauty vs restraint, armor vs vulnerability. clothing isn't just worn, it's used—to decorate, to use, to reclaim, this campaign places their language inside a lebanese home—timeless, intimate, and quietly radical.

impact — it's a manifesto for how the house is shot, how the fashion is styled, how the people move. the villa transforms into a living metaphor—of legacy, duality, and survival—and fashion becomes the language through which those truths are both revealed and concealed.



photo / video direction

الشرق الأوسط
MIDDLE EAST ARCHIVE

casting / styling and locations

internal use only



Direction —

frames create a layered narrative. images move through domestic surrealism, texture & tone, lebanese interiors / nostalgia, family portraiture, camera tone / voyeurism. identity revealed in fragments, through the lens of longing, lineage, and light.

a visual archive of what this feels like. textures that don't match but somehow belong. a camera that floats like a memory. elegance layered over history. family as image, fashion as language. rooms that perform beauty. what gets passed down, what gets concealed, what stays in the walls.

a fashion film set inside a house that remembers everything. we wander through it together.

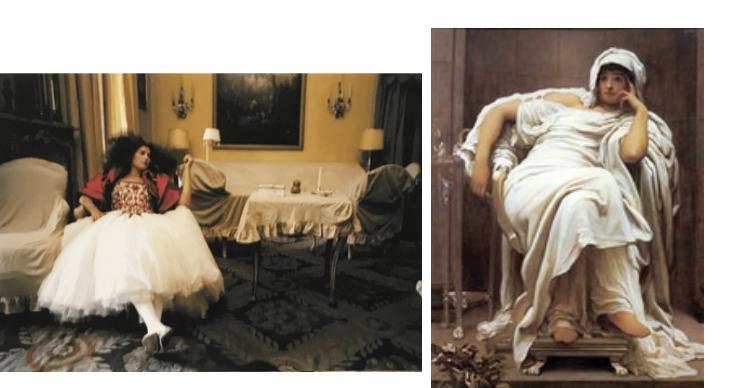
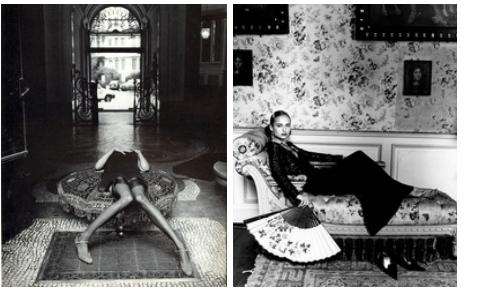


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Numero — 1

+

surreal low angle stare-down—legs parted,
perspective flipped

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Asal 'A Albi.

creative direction

(photo / video)

internal use only

(pg 13)



اللبناني

MIDDLE EAST ARCHIVE . a visual presentation



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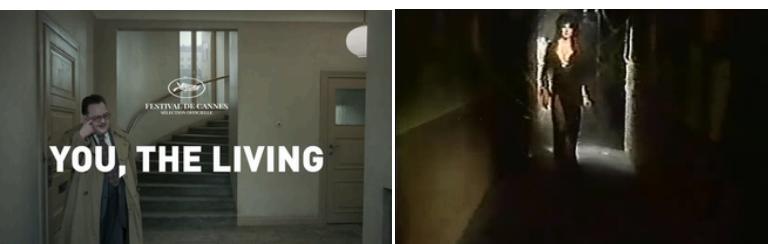
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(pg 14)



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Asal 'A Albi.

creative direction

(photo / video)

internal use only

(pg 15)



Numero — 1

+

role reversal + dual character framing—activates the dynamic and flips the expected gaze, injects narrative



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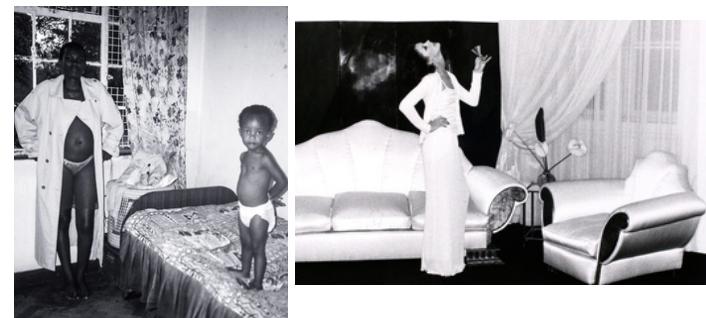
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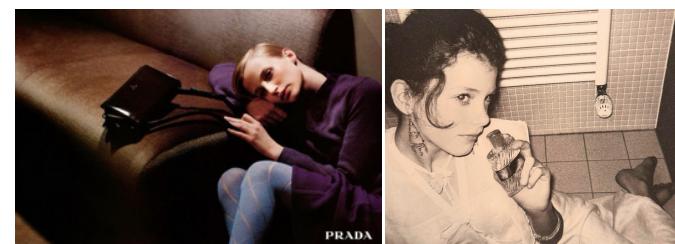
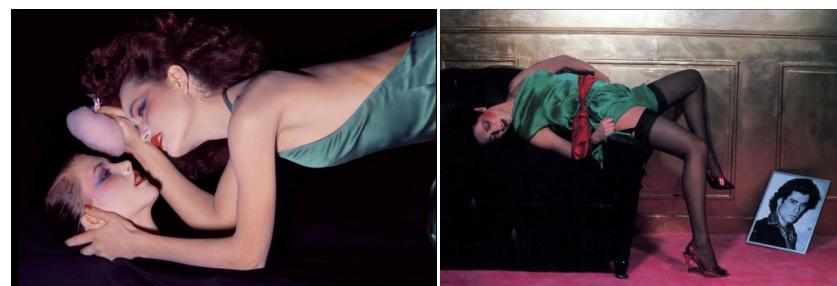
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Asal 'A Albi.

creative direction

(photo / video)

internal use only

(pg 20)



+



Direction —

additional references.

internal use only



Asal 'A Albi.

creative direction

(photo / video)

internal use only

(pg 21)



+



Direction —

additional references.

internal use only





styling / casting — clothing as inheritance

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cast feels like real family—non-models, regional energy, timeless faces that embody lebanese beauty. talent with a commanding presence. each model channels elegance through a refined, modern lens — confident, authentic, visually unforgettable. wardrobe is clean, elegant, lived-in. crisp shirting, knitwear, soft tailoring. barefoot indoors, jewelry handed-down. clothing doesn't perform — it belongs.

internal use only



hmua direction

الأشياء
MIDDLE EAST ARCHIVE

almost bare..nude glam grunge.

internal use only

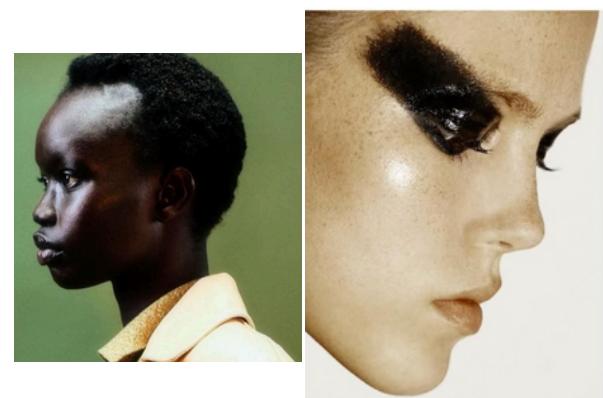
Asal 'A Albi.

creative direction

(photo / video)

internal use only

(pg 24)



HMUA Direction —

hair and makeup direction focuses on authentic and raw beauty results. looks ft. a blend of natural glam and grungy slept-in-like makeup (thinking of my auntie's tattooed lipstick and eyeliner, her red-henna died hair and matching red nails) paired with natural long, flowing hair or buzzed styles.

internal use only

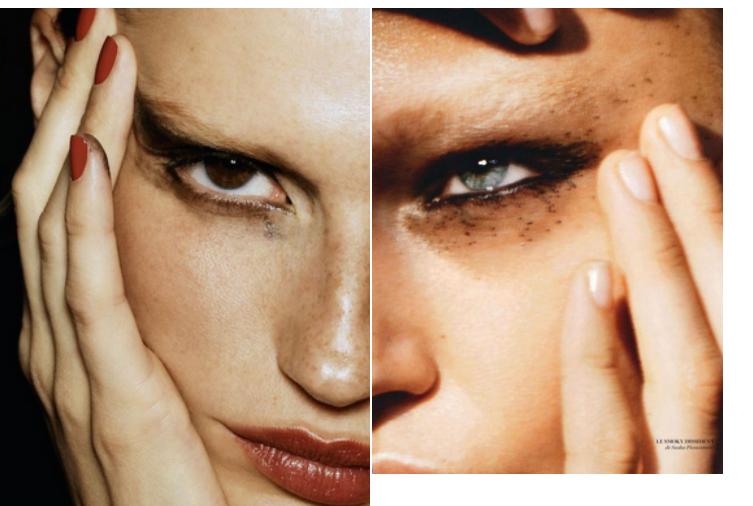
Asal 'A Albi.

creative direction

(photo / video)

internal use only

(pg 25)

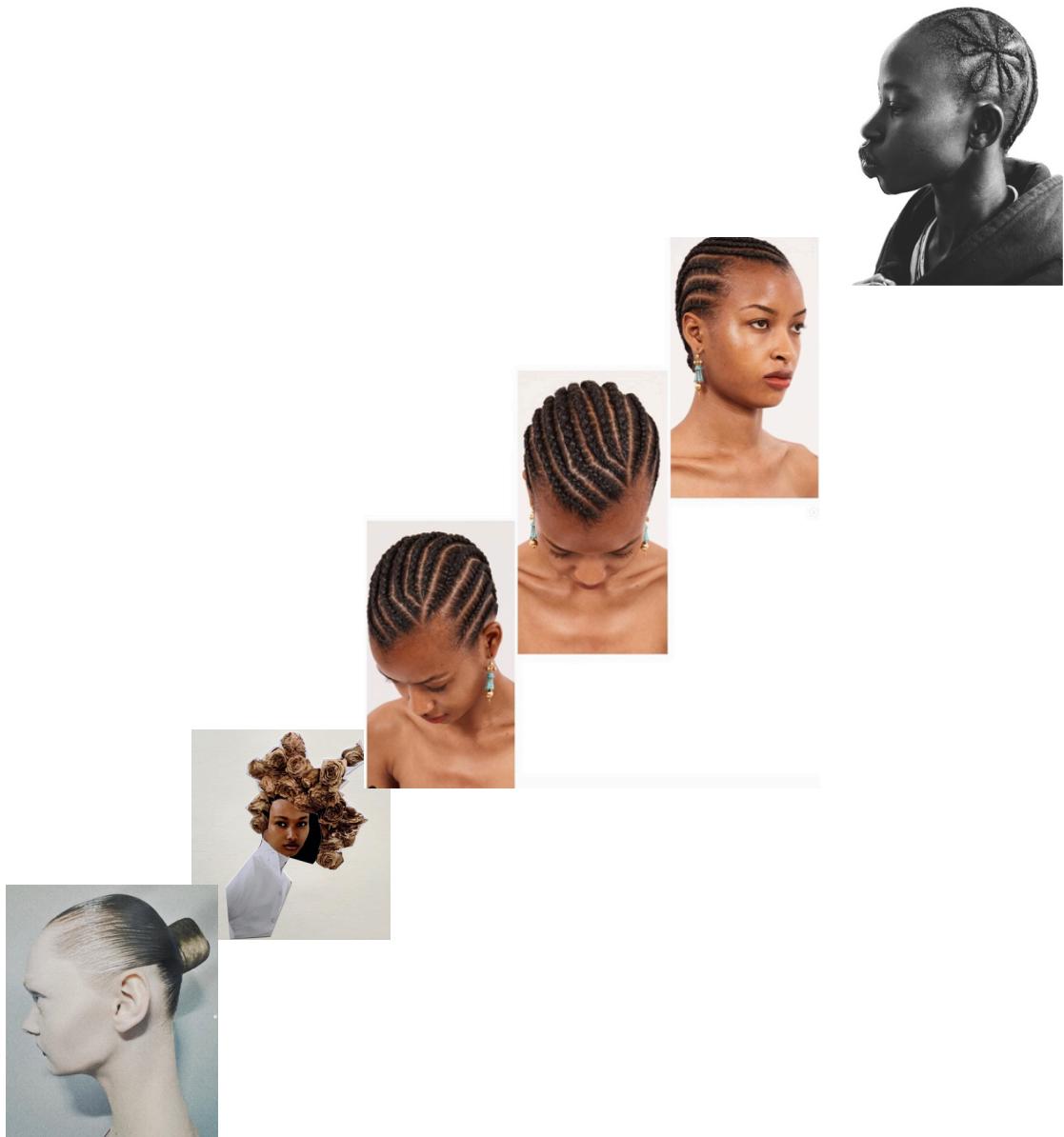


HMUA Direction —

hmua direction draws focus to each model's unique features, enhancing their natural + inherent beauty.

internal use only





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creative direction

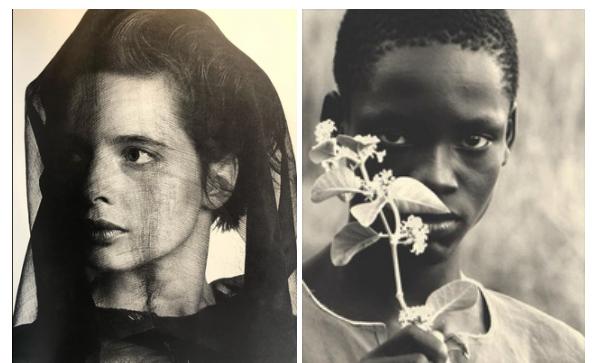
(photo / video)

internal use only

(pg 26)



+



HMUA Direction —

hmua direction supported by arabic beauty products.

internal use only



Beryl knew when she polished herself in the eye with her mascara that it was going to be that sort of a day.

Beryl knew when she polished herself in the eye with her mascara that it was going to be that sort of a day.



proposed locations

الأرشيف
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names + images hyperlinked to respective locations

internal use only



Numero — 1
+
villa katbe

Numero — 1
+
villa katbe



Numero — 6
+
beit trad



Numero — 3
+
albergo



Numero — 5
+
mir amin palace



Numero — 1
+
villa katbe



Numero — 1
+
villa katbe



Numero — 6
+
beit trad



Numero — 2
+
arthaus

Proposed Locations — *Names + Images Hyperlinked To Respective Locations*

1. villa katbe (my family's villa)
2. arthaus beirut
3. albergo hotel beirut
4. capo batroun
5. mr amin palace
6. beit trad
7. my brother's grandfather's villa



Numero — 5
+
mir amin palace



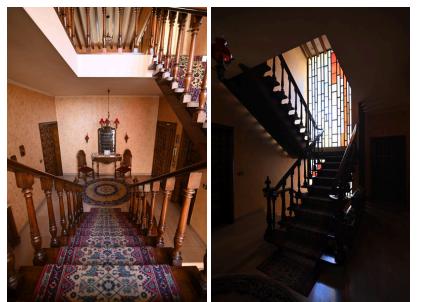
Numero — 7
+
brother's grandfather's villa



Numero — 5
+
mir amin palace

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6. beit trad
7. my brother's grandfather's villa



Numero — 7
+
brother's grandfather's villa



Numero — 5
+
mir amin palace



Numero — 7
+
brother's grandfather's villa



Numero — 1
+
villa katbe



Numero — 1
+
villa katbe



Numero — 1
+
villa katbe



thank you

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let's make it happen.

internal use only