NEW FACULTY ORIENTATION
2015-2016

My Neighborhood – My Favorites
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This is an opinionated list, and neither neutral nor comprehensive. It contains my personal recommendations of neighborhood businesses, ones that I patronize because they are friendly, polite, and offer quality products and services. A few others are noted because they are particularly useful for their hours or range of goods. The list is meant to get you started, and you will certainly develop your own favorites over time.

Newcomers may initially find it hard to locate these places since Beirut-style addresses are imprecise. I strongly recommend purchasing the ‘A-Z’ street maps of Beirut, Zawarib Beirut.

Ras Beirut still has many village-like qualities, and knowing shopkeepers on a first name basis is part of the neighborhood experience. Welcome!

Cynthia Myntti, AUB Neighborhood Initiative
updated May 2016

1. Groceries and Bread

Groceries

1.1. **Aziz** – On the boundary between our neighborhood and downtown, Aziz is the place for hard-to-find gourmet items. Best international cheeses in Beirut and excellent wine selection. Kantari.01-358000 (off the map)

1.2. **Earth Market** each Tuesday from 8am-1pm. An open air farmer’s market is open in the alley in front of Bread Republic. Fresh organic produce, pulses, nuts, traditional pastries. Freshly made saj sandwiches.

1.3. **Edisson Roastery Shatila**- This favored traditional nuts shop also sells sesame brittle and dried fruits. Makdissi at Antoine Gemayel St. Yousef can be reached at 01-342083/ 03-765392. Hurry up because the building may be pulled down soon!

1.4. **Healthy Basket shop** - An AUB project supporting organic producers in Lebanon. Sells fresh produce and Adonis Valley organic oils, jams, vinegars and pastes. [http://www.healthybasket.org/contact.php](http://www.healthybasket.org/contact.php) Yacoubian Building, Caracas, at the western end of Hamra. www.healthybasket.org/contact.php Open M-F 7:30-2:30. During the academic year, products are also on sale at the AUB Pilot Plant on Thursday mornings.

1.5. **Lukma Tayyiba** – This immaculate shop sells excellent yogurts, labnes, local cheeses, and other artisanal products. Sidani St. Joseph Sahyoun, proprietor.

1.6. **Nougatini** – Sisters Rima and Karima el-Barrage continue the chocolate business their father established. Exquisite chocolates, chocolate-dipped fruits and marzipan. Elegant seasonal displays, perfect gifts. Pricey. Jeanne d’Arc Street. 01-343759

1.7. **Oussama the Greengrocer** - If you can look beyond the shambolic state of this hole-in-the-wall that expands onto the pavement and from their truck, you will find produce of above average quality at fair prices. Oussama gives special attention to regular customers, many of whom are connected to AUB. Gemayel St, off Sidani.
1.8. **Sam’s Beverages** – Hisham (Sam) Mawlawi offers a comprehensive selection of spirits, wines and beers. Open noon to midnight. Near the COOP on Nehme Jafet St. Home delivery. 03-397170

1.9. **Score Market** – Very convenient late hour shopping for basic foodstuffs, dairy, drinks and household cleaning things. Staff not particularly friendly. Sidani St.

1.10. **Sidani Butchery** – Mustapha and his colleagues do a rousing phone order business with local hotels and restaurants, and offer excellent quality meat and chicken - cut, ground or pounded to specification. Polite service, home delivery. White awning, no name on shop front. Sidani at Mahatma Gandhi St. 01-740815, 01-740784.

1.11. **NEW Souk el Tayyeb – Gefinor** – the oldest and most famous farmers’ market in Beirut, held on Saturday downtown, has now opened at the Gefinor Center plaza every Wednesday from 12 noon until 6pm.

1.12. **NEW Spinneys Supermarket** – Good all around grocery store near AUBMC, with extensive, inexpensive housewares section. Sidani/Souraty Street

1.13. **TSC** – Kuwaiti supermarket chain located at the corner of Makdissi and Sadat. Not very inspiring, but open early and late, every day.

**Bread – Patisseries**

1.14. **Amal Bohsali** – Connoisseurs swear that this is the best oriental sweet shop in Beirut. Their baklawa is mouth-watering. Abdel-Aziz south of Emile Edde (Lyon) Street. (off the map)

1.15. **Bread Republic** – Beirut’s best local shop for western style breads. Try the fig or walnut rye bread, or a sesame baguette! Café serves breakfast, sandwiches, soups. Open from 7:30am until late. Off Hamra, near Jeanne d’Arc

1.16. **Gustav** – Executive pastry chef Noor Ramlawi has created some heavenly cakes and tarts. He also can place special orders for Oslo ice cream and sells it by the cone, and has a small mezzanine with tables for eating in. Open 7am-10pm most days; opens later on Sunday. Antoine Gemayel, between Makdissi and Hamra. 01-747199 or 71 499961

1.17. **Paul** – see 5.10

1.18. **Taj al-Moulouk** – Oriental sweets. Their outstanding (and fattening) warm cheese kunafi is served on kaak each morning, and their sesame cookies (barazi’) are excellent. They also serve ice cream next door. Bliss St at Sadat.

### 2. Eating and Drinking Out

#### Snacks

2.1. **Bliss House** - Everyone has their favorite shawarma place in town, and this is mine. Bliss Street. Great fresh juices next door.

2.2. **Faysal’s** – A great place for manaqesh: oven-baked dough with zaatar mixture, cheese, and other condiments, usually eaten for breakfast. Bliss Street at Sadat, opposite the Hbeish Police Station

2.3. **Ichkhanian Bakery** – Madame Ichkhanian’s bakery is located in an old building in Zukak al-Blat, next to the (German) Orient Institute and just outside our AUB neighborhood. She makes the best Armenian meat pizzas (lahm bi-ajine) in Beirut. Try the pomegranate version. Until 2pm, Mon-Sat. Home delivery.01-375178, 03-216012 (off the map)
2.4. **King of Foul** – This hole-in-the-wall place serves delicious foul and fattah mornings through early afternoon. Located next to Oussama the greengrocer on Antoine Gemayel St. Eat in or take away. 01-341589

2.5. **Sahyoun**. Beirut’s most famous falafel place from the Damascus Road has opened a branch in the neighborhood; check it out and compare! Sidani at the corner of Nehme Jafet Street. 01-347222.

2.6. **Tabbara** – Good falafel is hard to find in Ras Beirut, but the best place in the neighborhood is Tabbara. Tabari St (parallel to Abdel-Aziz), south of Emile Edde (Lyon) Street. Open from 11am-6pm every day except Sunday. 01-350821.

### Ice Cream

2.7. **Alpina** – Actually a chocolate shop, their seasonal ice cream is also very good. In pre-packaged cones and squares, and by the half kilo. Abdel-Aziz Street, near AUB. 01-344846

2.8. **Bliss House (see 3.1)** – It’s terrible but delicious, the infamous, Beirut’s historical, soft “Merry Cream” ice cream. Chocolate, strawberry or vanilla, or mixed.

2.9. **Oslo** – Beirut’s most delicious ice cream. Call for home delivery. [Pricey.](http://www.osloicecream.com/) 03-369313. (not on the map)

### Cafes and Bars

2.10. **Bread Republic** (see 2.2) – This bread place also serves soups and sandwiches, and all day breakfasts. Open from 7:30am. Off Hamra near Jeanne d’Arc. A good meeting place.

2.11. **Café Rawdah** – This old-fashioned family place near the sea offers the perfect spot to drink lemonade and watch the sun set. Behind Luna Park, near the Sporting Club.

2.12. **Cru** - This small wine bar offers interesting new Lebanese wines by the glass. Matta Bldg. (opposite Le Rouge) Makdissi Street. 01-344565

2.13. **Dar** - This café is situated in a pretty old house and garden, and offers light fare. The building is actually the home of Dar el Mussawir, a photography workshop and bookshop. Rome Street, Wardiyeh, in a little alley behind the Interdesign building. 01-373347. 71-236627.

2.14. **De Prague** - This café-bar always has a buzz, and combines good food, drink, wifi, and an occasional exhibition. Casual sofas and moody lighting. (Allows smoking unfortunately). Makdissi St., near Abdel-Aziz. 01-744864

2.15. **MedCafe – Casper and Gambini**. Airy café/restaurant in the AUBMC, next to the Saab Medical Library on Maamari Street. The salad bar is excellent. Open daily early till late. AUB IDs get 15% discount.

2.16. **Paul** - Yes, we too have a branch of the ubiquitous Paul near AUB. And the French breads and pastries and omelets are as good here as anywhere in France or the world. They serve “American coffee” specially for AUB. Breakfast, lunch and dinner. Bliss Street, facing campus.


2.19. **Younes** - original – Move over Starbucks, Gloria Jean's, Caribou and Costa, Younes is the real deal. A family-run business selling coffee beans of various origins, and brewed coffee in a pleasant open air café. Wifi. Nehmeh Jafet Street, near Commodore Hotel.

2.20. **Younes – Abdel-Aziz.** Amin Younes did AUB a great favor by creating a new branch of his enormously successful café near the Medical Gate, on Abdel-Aziz Street.

2.21. **Zenjabeel Coffee Forum.** Ahmad, an architect from Aleppo, founded this lovely place for coffee, drinks and food. The makanek sausages with cherries and walnuts are to die for. Lagos Center, Sadat Street south of Hamra. Turn right at Fransabank and it’s right there. [www.facebook.com/zenjabeelcoffee](http://www.facebook.com/zenjabeelcoffee) 01-344537.

**Restaurants**

2.22. **Abu Naim** - Good Lebanese food in a casual atmosphere. (He also allows indoor smoking unfortunately). Abdel-Aziz Street, facing the old Piccadilly Theater, just south of Hamra. 01-750480

2.23. **Appetito Trattoria** – A friendly Italian with good salads and pastas. Open lunch and dinner. Mahatma Gandhi Street, near Hamra. 01-347346.

2.24. **Bagatelle** – Restaurant in an old house with garden, simply decorated to emphasize the traditional architecture. Basic Mediterranean menu. Best to reserve if a large group. In a small street off Jeanne d’Arc, near LaCigale. 01-342842.

2.25. **Blue Note** – Landmark neighborhood place with live jazz in the evening. Good daily specials. Makhoul Street, opposite St. Mary’s Church. 01-743857

2.26. **Les Gourmandises Coffee Shop at the Bristol Hotel** – Enjoy a meal or refreshments from a glass window overlooking the street. The plats du jour are famous, so if you are hankering for Mouloukhiyyeh on a Thursday or Sayadiyyeh on a Friday, head here. Good for a quiet conversation. Follow Abdel-Aziz St south to Mme Curie. 01-353438


2.28. **Dottore** – Cute small place with pizza and other dishes. Service a bit slow. But worth a try. Open for lunch and dinner. Antoine Gemayel Street. 01-349379.

2.29. **Gruen Eatery** – Named after the modernist architect of the Gefinor center, fascinating people watching at lunch. International cuisine. Weekend brunches. Quiet for morning coffee, afternoon tea or an early evening drink. Not open at night. Owner Amal Zein is an attentive host. Pricey. 01-737344.

2.30. **Kabab-ji** – Reasonable kebabs and mezzes. Very popular with AUB faculty, staff and students. Packed and noisy at lunch; empty at night. Bliss St, behind McDonalds.

2.31. **Mezyan.** Trendy resto offers eccentric food, drinks, live music and other evening programs. Open from breakfast til late. (Allows smoking unfortunately). On Hamra Street, opposite Red Shoe. 01-740608. 71-293015.

2.32. **Onno** – coming soon. This much appreciated Armenian restaurant from Bourj Hammoud is opening a branch in the neighborhood. Ibrahim Abd al-Aal between Makdissi and Hamra Streets.
2.33. **Osaka** – Japanese sushi and cooked dishes, excellent quality, pricey. On the downtown edge of the neighborhood. Kantari. 01-360630

2.34. **Salon Beirut** – charming, relaxed place for a bite or a drink. Near the Gefinor Center, opposite Najjar Hospital.

2.35. **Socrate** – A cheery place for lunch, with daily dishes and a mezze-salad bar. A block from the Bliss Gate on Sidani St. Also catering. 01-363011

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**3. Books and Supplies**

**Books – journals**

3.1. **Antoine** - The most extensive selection of books and magazines in Beirut. Staff are mostly rude and unhelpful (so don’t take it personally). Hamra Street.

3.2. **Librarie Internationale** - Antranik Helvadjian, the occasionally grumpy, often charming owner, has an especially good collection of ME politics, art/design and cook books. Next to MEA at the Gefinor Center. 01-43285

3.3. **Little Bookshop** – A charming small shop with an eclectic selection of English fiction, non-fiction and arts books. Owner Adib Rahhal knows the contents of most everything he sells. Basra Street, off Jeanne d’Arc. Odd hours so best to call before you turn up. 03-833493

**Stationery and art supplies**

3.4. **Books and Pens** – Convenient location and hours, to 10pm every night except Sunday. Jeanne d’Arc Street, near Bliss.

3.5. **City Stationery** - Small shop with comprehensive range of art paper and art supplies. Owners offer knowledgeable advice. Jeanne d’Arc St, near Sidani

3.6. **Diabco** – A cavernous basement with office and art supplies. Hamra St, after Sadat. 01-739439

3.7. **Fairco** - Another cavernous basement with office and art supplies. Mahatma Gandhi St at Sidani, up from the Bliss Gate. 01-747061

3.8. **Gilar** - A friendly stationery store with a wide range of local and imported goods. Hamra Street near Madina Theater.

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**4. Household**

4.1. **A&P Chemali Stores** - wide selection of small household appliances, dishes, candles, cooking pots and utensils. Owners are charming and helpful. Souraty Street, near Abdel-Aziz. 01-346958.

4.2. **Abou Hassan Stores** – Small jam-packed shop with inexpensive kitchen utensils and helpful staff. Glasses, plastic containers, and more. Off Sadat on Adonis St, near TSC

4.3. **Beyrouthi Freres** - Lamps and lampshades. An alternative to expensive ready made lamps. Mr. Roger Beyrouthi can transform a pot or jug into a beautiful lamp. 01-349411. Antoine Gemayel St, near Warde Fabrics, south of Hamra.

4.4. **Domtex** - A Hamra institution for towels and bed linens. Mme Liliane Shamsi and colleagues offer moderately priced, locally made products, most are pure cotton. Corner of Abdel-Aziz and Hamra Streets. 01-345901

4.5. **Melki** – Melki is a veritable Aladdin’s cave of buttons, ribbons, thread and more. Makdissi St, just off Jeanne d’Arc. 01-343709
4.6. **Metal&Wood** - Household utensils and furnishings shop with a Scandinavian touch. Behind the Central Bank, on America Street. 01-361480/90.

4.7. **Tony Naufal’s no name shop** – Tony has a small shop full of all sorts of useful electrical and other household stuff, and he can get what he doesn’t have. Exceptionally friendly. Open late. Ibrahim Abdel-Aal Street, near Souraty.

4.8. **Sentier d‘Orient** – This shop sells locally made soaps with local scents. Elegantly presented, great gifts. Gefinor Center, next to Gruen.

4.9. **Warde** for curtains and upholstery. Incredible range of mostly imported fabrics. Their Solderie has good bargains. Antoine Gemayel St, near Crowne Plaza Hotel.

5. **Pharmacies**

5.1. **The City Pharmacy** – Well-stocked, newly renovated pharmacy on Hamra Street, conveniently open 24/7. Facing Crowne Plaza Hotel. 01-349349

5.2. **Kutteh Pharmacy** - Alex Kutteh offers trustworthy advice and medications. Open daily 8am-7pm, except Sunday. Corner of Jeanne d‘Arc and Sidani Street. 01-342355. 01-347355.

5.3. **Wardieh Pharmacy** - Wide range of products including cosmetics. Open 24/7. Sidani/Souraty Street, Wardieh end. 01-751343, 03-179757.

6. **Services**

6.1. Beauty (facials/massage) – **Dermacare**. Speak to Adele for an appointment. Excellent. Sidani Street, corner of Sadat. 01-737488


6.3. Eyeglasses - **Space Vision**. This is my favorite optics shop of the many in the neighborhood. Good selection and prompt prescription service. Ali Ajouz. Abdel-Aziz Street, near Sidani/Souraty. 01-353126.

6.4. Hardware. **Hassan’s no-name place**. For all sorts of hardware essentials. He can also recommend reliable plumbers and others for household repairs. Near Oussama Greengrocer and King of Foul, Antoine Gemayel Street. Open 6:30am-5:00pm. 01-342411.

6.5. Jewelry repair – **Barsoumian Jewellery**. Jean Barsoumian sells jewelry but also can repair just about anything for a reasonable price. Opens midday. Jeanne d‘Arc Street near Makdissi. 01-354243.


6.7. Leather repairs/conditioning – **Said Nader** For repairs to bags, belts and other leather goods, Said Nader is the best. Opposite Café Younes, Hamra Center. 01-348347 03-053496.

6.8. Locksmith – **Samuel Mozian** and his colleague Mike change locks, cut new keys. Gemayel St, off Makdissi, opposite Decoratex. 01-343955. 03-810460.

6.9. Photocopying, scanning, printing and binding – A favorite of AUB architecture and graphic design students is **Ind Riad** for excellent, reasonably priced services. Riad’s new location is on the lower ground floor of a residential building, dead end off Makhoul Street. 01-341079.
6.10. Picture framing, mirrors – Moustafa Abdellatif Arakji and Sons. Ahmad Arakji runs this family business on Manara Street, a small street parallel to Bliss near the old lighthouse. Good value for basic frames and mirrors. 03-838430

6.11. Shoe repair – Nader Shoes NEW LOCATION. Mr Nader dyes leather and repairs shoes. Very good quality work. Moderately expensive. Jeanne d’Arc St, south of Hamra, near Lyon. 01-347285;70-008372


6.13. Travel Agencies. For airline tickets and travel packages, I prefer Ghazi Travel on Bliss. 01-365705. www.ghazitravel.com. I also use Tania Travel, located on Sidani St, off Jeanne d’Arc, for reasonable day tours in Lebanon. Mary Petrakian. 01-739682, 03-686121.

6.14. Video rental and sales - Chico. Diran Mardirian and colleagues are movie buffs and have an excellent collection of art house, Hollywood, regional and educational films. Sidani Street, near Sadat. 01-743855

6.15. Watch repair/batteries - Jean Satjian. Mr. Satjian offers friendly prompt repair and battery replacement service. He also sells watches, clocks, and jewelry. Next to Socrate on Mahatma Gandhi St. 01-739547.

7. Clothes and accessories

7.1. Women – Kalabsha, on the 4th floor of a building kitty-corner to Costa on Hamra St, is the creation of a local designer Loulwa AbdelBaki. Reasonable prices.


7.3. Ethnic beads/jewelry/clothes - Ants. This shop, especially popular with young people, has developed a cult following for its Indian clothes and ambience. Interesting jewelry. Khalidy/Makhoul Street.

8. Flowers and plants

8.1. Jacaranda - A pretty new flower shop that specializes in unusual, artistic arrangements. Pricey. Corner of Rome and Maamari Streets. 01-374466

8.2. Takkoush – A large extended-family flower business on one stretch of Jeanne d’Arc. The corner shop is my favorite, run by a genteel old man reputed to be a former movie star.

8.3. Violetta – Flower shop on Sidani Street, off Jeanne d’Arc. They deliver plants, soil and pots to your home.

9. Artisanat/Handicrafts


9.3. Hodai - This shop sells affordable handicrafts from around the world, but notably Palestinian pottery and Syrian scarves. Open M-Sat 9-5. On Nehme Jafet St, near Mayflower Hotel. 01-340659
9.4. **Inaash** – The most elegant and pricey of the Palestinian embroidery projects, specializing in handsome modern designs and colors on jackets and shawls. Some articles are ready made in their shop, others must be special ordered. [www.inaash.org](http://www.inaash.org). In an alley off Mansur Jurdak/Sidani St, close to the old lighthouse. 01-740609.

9.5. **Orient 499** – This elegant and expensive shop is an aesthetic treasure. Despite first appearances, it is possible to find affordable items. Omar Daouk Street, above the old Holiday Inn. 01-369499

### 10. Art Galleries

10.1. **Agial Gallery** – Saleh Barakat’s gallery features contemporary art, and temporary exhibitions featuring Middle Eastern artists. Worth joining their mailing list for openings. Abdel-Aziz Street, near AUB. A second larger gallery now also open off Clemenceau, rue Justinien. [www.agialart.com](http://www.agialart.com) 01-345213

10.2. **Galerie Janine Rubeiz** – This gallery is in Raouche, just outside our neighborhood, but worth noting for its excellent shows and openings great for people-watching. Raouche Corniche, above Banque Audi. 01-868 290

10.3. **Zaman Gallery** – An older gallery featuring Middle Eastern artists. In a small alley off Sadat Street, south of Hamra. 01-745571

10.4. **Zico House** – Occupying a beautiful old house on Spears Street near the Sanayeh public gardens. More than an art gallery: Exhibition space, garden café and bar, events space, offices of NGOs such as Helem and Greenline. [www.zicohouse.org](http://www.zicohouse.org) 03-590269 (off the map).