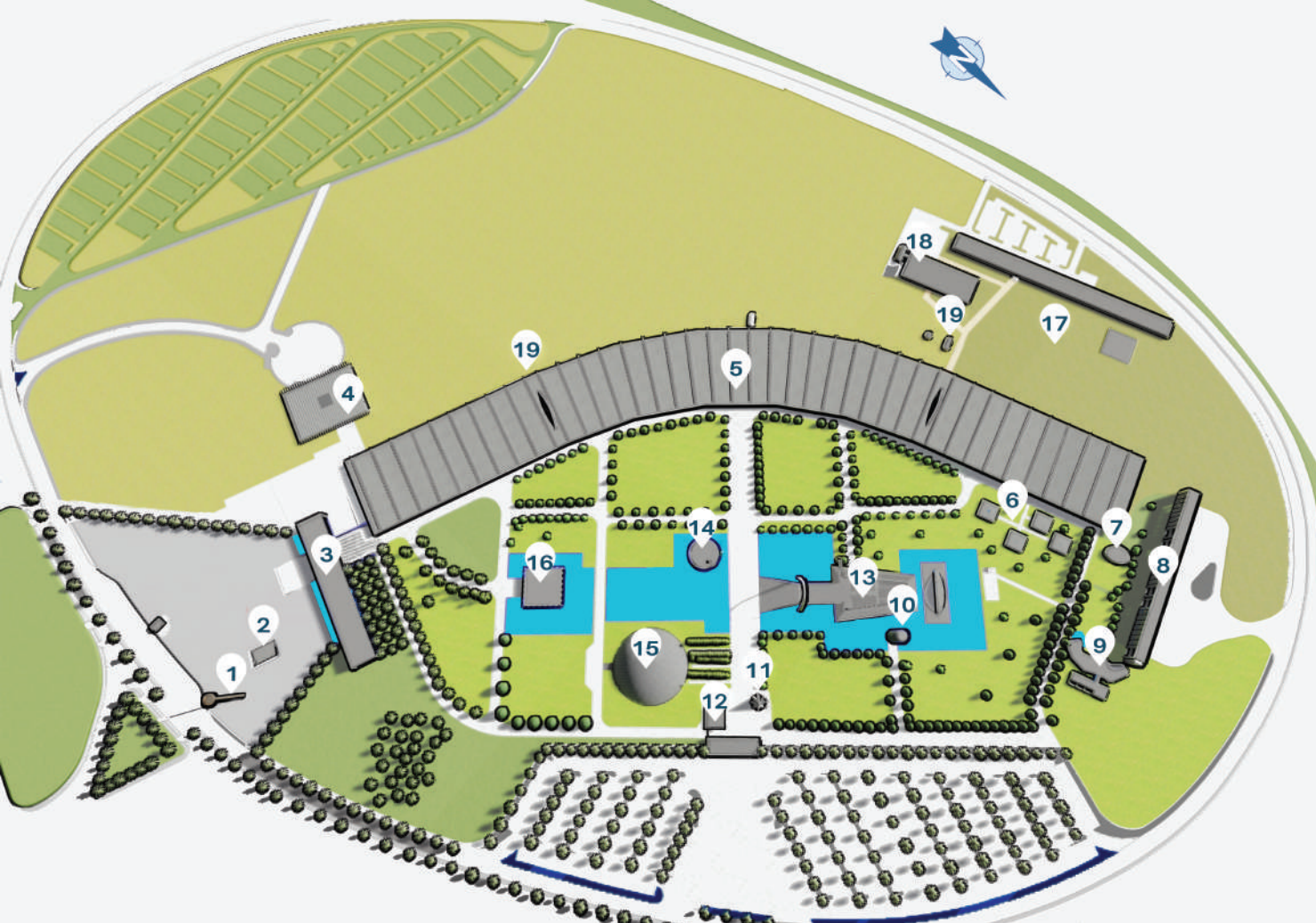




01 Lighting Tower: It is the only metal structure and the tallest in the Fairground, standing at a height of 52 meters. It is designated to illuminate the parking area at the main entrance, with an interior ladder leading to the circular platform at the top for the maintenance of lighting fixtures.

02 Ticketing Booth: An independent semi-underground recessed building dedicated to purchasing entry tickets to visit the exhibition pavilions. It is designed in a way that does not obstruct the view of the main entrance portico and features a wide ramp leading to the ticket windows where employees sit behind them in a longitudinal space equipped with private toilets.

03 Main Entrance Portico: A massive reinforced concrete rectangular table-shaped building, measuring 128 meters in length, 20 meters in width, and 10 meters in height. Below it lies the reception building with its semi-circular round arches (7 on the eastern façade and the same on the western façade), and underneath is the lower floor housing visitor service halls. Currently used as the Fair administration offices.

04 The Guesthouse: A small motel comprising a ground floor with an area of 3000 square meters, featuring 14 accommodation rooms equipped with bathrooms and terraces, each with its independent open-to-sky garden. It includes a large restaurant and a lobby with all the necessary services such as a kitchen, staff rooms, and public toilets. Its unique feature is that it is an introverted building with the absence of any windows at its four facades, relying on internal courtyards for natural lighting and ventilation, as an inspiration from the inner courtyard concept of traditional Arab houses, and this concept applies to all accommodation rooms, restaurant lounge, and main lobby.

05 The Grand Cover: Resembling the wings of a bird or an Australian boomerang, it is the largest and most important building in the Fairground, designed as a canopy to house underneath the pavilions of participating countries with an area of 48,000 square meters. It is approximately 700 meters long, 70 meters wide, and 7 meters high.

06 The Bars: Consisting of four neighboring buildings serving as coffee shops for light meals and beverages as a rest area at the end of the Grand Cover pavilion's visit.

07 Housing Museum: An oval-shaped building with an area of about 250 square meters on a ground floor, originally intended to showcase the history of residential architecture evolution in Lebanon and the world, featuring spiral walls partitioning to organize visitor paths, with separate entrance and exit doors.

08 Collective Housing: A four-upper-floor building with an open ground floor, originally comprising ten duplex apartments (five on each floor, covering an area of 250 square meters each, overlooking an outdoor terrace and garden on both the eastern and western sides), intended for housing the Fair staff and VIPs. It was harshly converted into a three-star hotel in 2000. It was a unique example of a collective housing concept (villa building), one of the innovations of the Modern Swiss architect Le Corbusier.

09 Typical Residence: A villa designated for the Fair General Manager's residence, inspired by Niemeyer's private residence in Rio de Janeiro known as Casa das Canoas. The building consists of two sections: an open western section with an open glass facade for the living and dining rooms, featuring a canopy supported by thin columns overlooking an outdoor swimming pool. The eastern section is an introverted rectangular block connected to the living area by a private corridor and houses three bedrooms, a kitchen, and related services. The exterior facades are fully clad with natural limestone with the absence of any external windows for privacy purposes, completely relying on internal courtyards in front of each room to provide natural lighting and ventilation.

10 Restaurant and Water Tower: A cylindrical building with six floors, 25 meters in height and 9 meters in diameter, dedicated to supplying the reflective water pools, featuring a restaurant on the third upper floor with a capacity of 50 people connected through an open spiral stair to a panoramic terrace on the top roof, covered with an outstanding circular reinforced concrete umbrella. The tower is equipped with an electric elevator, and an inner closed spiral staircase connecting all floors.

11 The Manège (Pyramid): A pyramid-shaped experimental structure resembling to an Indian tent, located within the area designated for children's entertainment.

12 Children's Area Annex: A reinforced concrete roof structure containing children's toilets block and drinking water fountains.

13 Open-Air Theater: With a seating capacity of 1285 spectators, surrounded by reflective pools from four sides, featuring a separate stage platform covered by a shell-shaped concrete canopy. Beneath it are the backstage rooms connected to the stage via an external staircase, while underneath the theater seating area, there is a bowling alley, the first of its kind in Lebanon at the time.

14 Space Museum: A square building at the base with an immersed staircase on the west side leading to the lower floor dedicated to displaying the latest space science discoveries. It is topped by a circular monopole platform serving as a helipad, connected to the base by a steel spiral staircase.

15 Experimental Theater: A dome-shaped of thin reinforced concrete shell with a diameter of about 60 meters at the base and a height of 14 meters, with a seating capacity of 1250 spectators. The central circular stage platform has an area of 300 square meters, connected by stairs to the lower floor where the dressing rooms, bathrooms, and technical services. The building has a main entrance for the public consisting of a submerged staircase leading to the lower floor from the east side, where the assembling foyer and public toilets are, and another entrance from the west side via another submerged staircase dedicated to artists and technicians. On the ground floor, there are four openings for exit doors, and the Dome overlooks the reflecting water pools from its west side.

16 Lebanese Pavilion: A square building with an area of 1000 square meters, surrounded by a peripheral gallery of pointed arches (7 arches on each façade), with steel columns to support the glazed squarish enclosure of the inner hall dedicated for exhibitions. It is dedicated to showcasing Lebanese products as a host country for the international fair, manifested on three interconnected levels through a pedestrian ramp and a staircase, equipped with a public toilet block, and the building is surrounded by reflective pools from all sides.

17 Administration: A two-story linear building with a ground and semi-basement floor, approximately 220 meters in length and 15 meters in width, originally intended to house the administration offices with all related services, and a private canteen for employees serviced from the kitchen in the basement.

18 Customs and Civil Defense: A building designated for customs management, for the task of inspecting imported goods to be exhibited at the participating countries' pavilions, with a permanent annex for the civil defense teams linked to a covered parking for firefighting vehicles.

19 Public Bathrooms: two Blocks, designated to serve the fair visitors, through male and female-separated divisions.



Rachid Karami International Fair

Visitor's Guide

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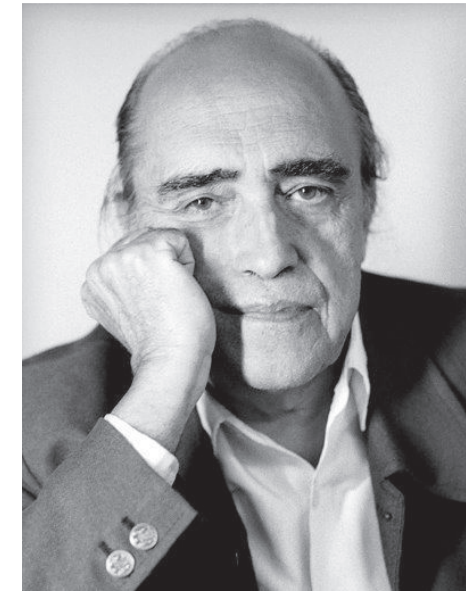
Texts and outline prepared by
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About the Exhibition

The idea of the permanent international fair in Lebanon emerged in the late 1950s, but it was not established until 1961 when Tripoli was adopted as its incubator, and the necessary properties were expropriated through special decrees. The architect Oscar Niemeyer was commissioned in 1962 to design all its facilities. It was supposed to open in 1967, but due to political and financial complications, the opening was repeatedly delayed until 1975, coinciding with the outbreak of the Lebanese Civil War, which quickly turned the fair into a facility for looting, vandalism, and military occupation for more than 22 years. During the postwar era, and since the early 1990s, there were several attempts to revive it, especially between 1993 and 1996, but they were not up to the desired level and were limited to specific spaces and activities far below expectations. In 2000, the fair underwent a harsh intervention by converting the collective housing building into a three-star hotel. In 2006, it was included on the World Monument Fund's list of the 100 most endangered heritage buildings in the world. In September 2018, it was included in the UNESCO World Heritage tentative list, and in January 2023, it was included in the final list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites, also listed as a world heritage site in danger. At the design stage the fair site covered 400,000 square meters, and today, with the extensions and its peripheral ring road, it covers an area of one million square meters.

Oscar Niemeyer 1907 — 2012



Born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Oscar Niemeyer was one of the most prominent pioneer architects of the second generation of twentieth-century Modernists. He was known for designing the new capital of Brazil, Brasília, and the United Nations Headquarters in New York. He was the recipient of the Pritzker Architecture Prize in 1988. Niemeyer visited Tripoli in the early summer of 1962 and stayed there for several months, during which he designed all the facilities of the permanent International Fair of Lebanon in Tripoli. He made a supervisory visit to the construction site of the fair facilities at the beginning of January 1967, marking his last visit to Lebanon. In his documented writings until shortly before his death, he expressed his wish that the Lebanese state would complete the construction and equipping of all the facilities to operate the fair as he had dreamed, as one of the projects that held a special place in his heart.

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