

# Layali Little Arabia

The 3<sup>rd</sup> year anniversary of the official  
designation of Little Arabia District in Anahim



Event Time:

**August 23, 2025  
Saturday  
2pm to 8pm**

Organized by:



Event Address:

**Modjeska Park  
1331 S Nutwood St,  
Anaheim, CA 92804**

**[www.AACivicCouncil.org/layali](http://www.AACivicCouncil.org/layali)**



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# Word from our ED.



For decades, Arab Americans and Arab immigrants have migrated to Southern California for many reasons, whether economic opportunities, educational pursuits, escaping genocide or civil war, seeking refuge, and more. Over the years, West Anaheim has grown into a thriving economic and cultural hub for Arab Americans.

Since the late 1990s, Arab American community leaders have worked to have Brookhurst St. recognized as Little Arabia much like other cultural districts across California, such as Little Saigon, Koreatown, and Little Armenia. These decades of advocacy culminated in 2022 with the #DesignateLittleArabia campaign, led by the Arab American Civic Council.

**On August 23, 2022, the Anaheim City Council voted to formally designate Little Arabia.**

This designation is a testament to the resilience of the Arab American community, it was achieved despite immense challenges. It's a powerful reminder of the importance of civic engagement: when we come together, we can transform our conditions for the better.

At a time when our community is under attack both here and abroad, from the genocide in Gaza to ICE raids targeting our neighborhoods, it is vital to create spaces where we can unite and honor our achievements. Layali Little Arabia marks the third anniversary of this historic designation. It is an opportunity to showcase our cultural pride, support Arab American businesses, and commemorate a victory that will benefit generations to come.

We extend our gratitude to everyone who made this historic day possible.

Rashad Al-Dabbagh  
Executive Director  
Arab American Civic Council





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# What to expect

# Layali Little Arabia

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LITTLE ARABIA  
NEXT EXIT



Food & flavors of  
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from Little Arabia's  
beloved businesses



Cultural Souq  
including  
handcrafted,  
wearable heritage,  
stories & art



Live performances  
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# Rundown From 2pm to 8pm

## Layali Little Arabia



**2:00 PM**

DJ Set by  
ThanksJoey



**3:00 PM**

Intro by MC  
Mikel Al  
Baghdadi

**3:15 PM**

History of Little  
Arabia District  
Panel



**4:00 PM**

DJ Set by  
ThanksJoey

**4:30 PM**

interlude  
فاصلة



**5:00 PM**

Opportunity Drawing  
and shoutouts

**5:30 PM**

**Performance  
by Mawtini  
Choir**



**6:00 PM**

DJ Set by  
ThanksJoey  
& Intermission



**7:00 PM**

**Live ensemble  
by Al Akhbar**



**8:00 PM**

**Closing  
remarks**



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Arub Store  
East is West  
Taqdimaat Collection  
Palestinian Tatreez  
Abjad Studio  
Heart Crafted  
Ebla Olive Oil  
Sunnah Healing Remedies



## NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Palestine Children's Relief Fund  
SAWA for Palestine  
CAIR-LA  
Global Hope 365  
American Arab Business Council of CA  
Orange County Public Works  
Arab American Caucus  
American Red Cross



# لئلا آريانا







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## LEGEND

-  3-COMPARTMENT SINK W/ WATER TANKS
-  RESTROOMS + HANDWASH
-  OPEN GRILL/FRYER
-  SHAWARMA SPIT/GRILL

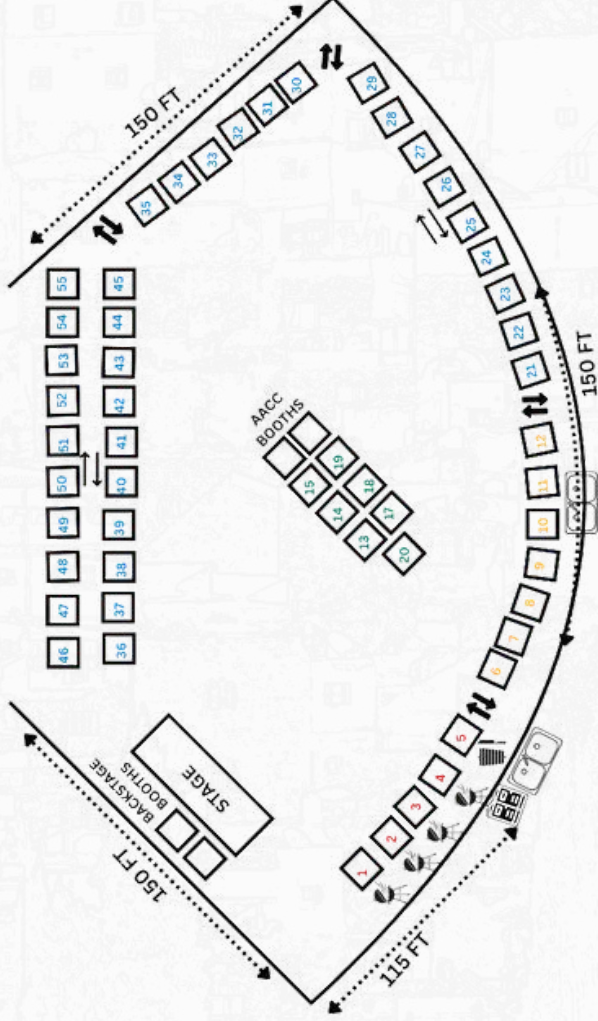
- FOOD / OPEN GRILL**
- 1 - HOUSE OF MANDI
- 2 - LITTLE ARABIA RESTAURANT
- 3 - WORLD FAMOUS GRILL
- 4 - POUTINE CRAZE
- 5 - KIMO SHAWARMA

- DESSERTS / COFFEE**
- 6 - KNAFEN CAFE
- 7 - BABYLON BREWS
- 8 - JUICE BAR
- 9 - CORNICHE COFFEE
- 10 - COASTAL CAFE
- 11 - CRINKLES AND CRACKLES
- 12 - HABIBIE RAMALLAH

## EVENT LAYOUT(8/13/2025) \*DESIGN NOT TO SCALE

- SPONSORS AREA**
- 13 - ALAA IBRAHIM
- 14 - COMERICA BANK
- 15 - OC URGENT CARE
- 17 - CM CARLOS LEON
- 18 - CM JESSIE LOPEZ
- 19 - FAM VANS
- 20 - AL KARMEL

- RETAIL VENDORS AND NONPROFIT**
- 21 - FRESH NUTS
- 22 - EBLA OLIVE OIL
- 23 - URBAN KARAK
- 24 - MANZILI
- 25 - SAFR APPAREL
- 26 - RED CROSS
- 27 - ALIB
- 28 - PCRF
- 29 - STB (PHOTO)
- 30 - LA DUNES
- 31 - EAST IS WEST
- 32 - JYD JEWELS
- 33 - CORAL BEACH
- 34 - HAKIKUFI
- 35 - TAQDIMAT
- 36 - BLAST PHARM
- 37 - LA ZWINA
- 38 - ABJAD/HEART CRAFTED
- 39 - GLOBAL HOPE
- 40 - SOS
- 41 - DERMA GLOW
- 42 - HENDAM
- 43 - CAIR-LA
- 44 - SPLASHGEAR
- 45 - HARF
- 46 - ABAYA 4 YOU
- 47 - SUNNAH HEALING
- 48 - WARM HEARTS
- 49 - ARUB STORE
- 50 - AABCC
- 51 - SOFAS FASHION
- 52 - OCBW
- 53 - UNDER ONE UMB
- 54 - ARAB AM CAUCUS
- 55 - PAL TATREEZ





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It is an honor to support Layali: A Celebration of Little Arabia, an evening filled with culture, connection, and deep community pride. Congratulations on three years since the official designation of Little Arabia, a milestone made possible by years of advocacy, leadership, and persistence by community members determined to have this neighborhood's identity recognized.

To those who led that work: thank you. Your dedication helped secure not just a name on a map, but a lasting symbol of presence, belonging, and resilience. Through your contributions in culture, art, business, and civic life, you continue to shape a stronger, more inclusive community for all of us.

Preserving cultural identity is not just about honoring the past, it's about protecting the right of all communities to be seen, heard, and valued. The ability to live with dignity and safety, free from discrimination or erasure, is fundamental. Upholding those rights is not optional, it's a shared responsibility.

As we gather tonight, surrounded by music, food, and loved ones, we celebrate the people who make this place special. And we recommit ourselves to the values that unite us: equity, justice, human rights, and mutual respect.

A heartfelt thank you to the Arab American Civic Council and to all our community partners for building a future where everyone has a place.

With gratitude and solidarity,

Councilwoman Jessie Lopez



# History of Little Arabia District

In the 1970s, immigrants from Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Egypt, and Iraq – along with sizable Iranian and Pakistani communities – began settling in West Anaheim.



By 1988, the Khoraki family opened Altayebat Market on Brookhurst Street, serving the neighborhood's growing population and meeting its distinct dietary and linguistic needs.

During the 1990s, the community grew rapidly. Many of its members were the children of Palestinians expelled during the 1948 Nakba, and they worked to preserve their distinct cultural identity.

It was during this period that the community began informally adopting the name "Little Gaza"—both as an homage to their ancestral homeland and as an affirmation of their right to self-identify.

## 'GAZA': It's a Strip, But in Anaheim

**Continued from B1**  
economy and good potential for growth," Ayloush explained. "The Southern California climate is very similar to that of most Arab countries—warm and close to the ocean and mountains. They move to Orange County for the same reason other people do: to stay away from the large crowds and get their space without sacrificing job opportunities and good schools."

"The influx of Middle Easterners began about a decade ago and has produced a thriving community. When they came, they set up shops, opened markets and built a mosque on nearby Brookhurst Street."

"It's still growing," Ayloush said. "It's snowballing—one store attracts another, and those two stores attract two more."  
As a result, many Arabic visitors also come to this part of Katella, one of Orange County's oldest and most diverse streets. "I'll tell you one thing," said Sam Beseiro, 24, an American-born Palestinian living in Utah who was taking a break from a business trip to visit the Fishawi Cafe. "There are no hangouts like this back in Salt Lake City."

Among the cultural manifestations the newcomers brought with them is *shisha*—sometimes called *argileh*—the ornately decorated water pipe around which Arab families and friends traditionally socialize.

Smokers inhale through a long, mouthpiece-tipped tube. The pipes, fueled by small boxes of glowing charcoal placed over a cup containing the aromatic tobacco, filter and



H. Hamadi of Corona smokes a water pipe at the Fishawi Cafe. Customers pay \$5 to smoke a pipeful of flavored tobacco that can last two hours.

tered smoke is almost nicotine-free. And many Arab families, Ayloush said, keep at least one pipe at home to share with their relatives and friends.

One of a handful of Orange County establishments providing Arab water pipes, the cafe—which

Turkish coffee, play chess or backgammon, listen to Arabic music and chat with friends in their native tongue.  
In addition to abutting Little Gaza, owner Raghib Alnabey said, Katella is a good location for the cafe because of its proximity to Disneyland.

"Arab friends like to go to said he stops by regularly for the peace of mind that smoking *shisha* provides.  
"I'm an old-fashioned kind of guy, so I stick with apple," he said. "What it does for you is get you to sit down, relax and think. It's like



Los Angeles Times

**'It's still growing. It's snowballing—one store attracts another, and those two stores attract two more.'**

HUSSAM AYLLOUSH  
American-Israeli relations office  
on Anaheim's 'Little Gaza'

"It's like a cocktail," the 30-year-old Jordanian immigrant said. "I like the gathering, I like seeing the guys. I saw my father smoke this all his life."  
Four young men sitting outside the cafe reveal that they are, in fact, distant cousins engaged in an informal family reunion.

It can be difficult to find a just here on Friday and Saturday nights.  
"It's a Middle Eastern atmosphere," said Beseiro, the visitor



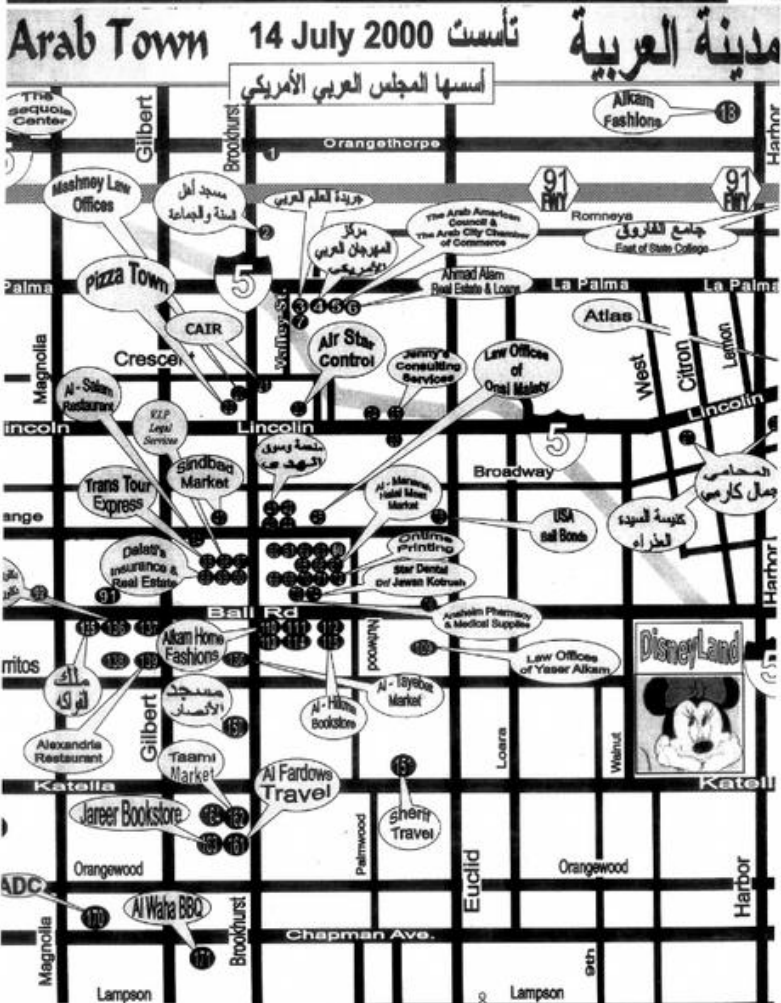


Figure 1. Map of Arab Town (source: *The Arab World* 27 June 2003, B8).

Around this time, the Brookhurst corridor, once referred to as “Arab Town,” began to be known as “Little Arabia,” a name that gained wider use by the mid-2000s.

[illegible]

Little Arabia ابلدنة العربية

A map segment showing Highway 239. On the left, a yellow shield indicates the route continues from LA County into Ventura County. The highway is labeled '239' and 'ORANGETHORPE'.

200 Martell مسجد اهل E. State College 10

204 American Global

210 Network

219 Trinity Tech

BROADWAY



Fresh Start


Pastry

12 Rued's Auto Care

246 Buffet

219 Hygienic Chamber Of Commerce Prestige Financial/Realty Restaurant Crescent Halal Pizza Fusion Cafe English 202 Emirate




Restaurant  
 Wake's  
 TransTour  
 35 36 61  
 27 28 30 40  
 29  
 Romalsa  
 214 StarFon

225 A-1 Poultry

[illegible]

230 Lamps Plus

241 Printing Services  
242 Masjid Al Anwar  
Sheriff Travel

234 The Patio

235 & Shipping 101 102 Jareer 103 Bookstore MAS

Saber BB-Q Al-Ferdows

241 Satellite TV Station

CHAPMAN AVE

106

The 13th Annual Arab American Day Festival

CHAPMAN AVE

November 7th, 8th, & 9th 2008

Salon Outrage

...AVE...  
...BU...  
...Bakery...  
...MA...  
...I...  
...R...

GARDEN GROVE BLVD

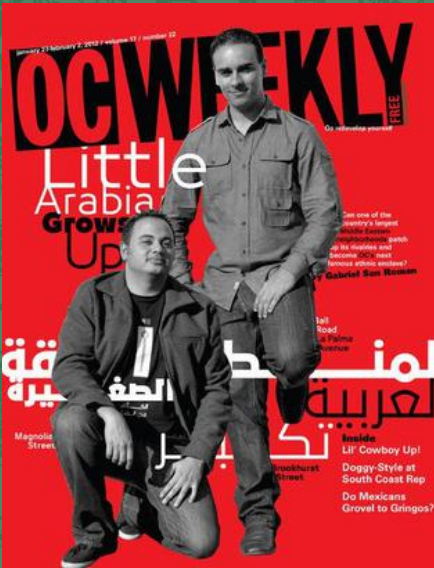
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In 2004, Fifty local leaders gathered at Access California Services to brainstorm ideas to elevate the Arab Community in Anaheim. Former City Councilman, Richard Chavez emphasizes the city's poor effort in reaching out to ethnic groups. Official Designation was suggested during brainstorming sessions.



In 2014, community leaders hosted a “Summit,” which brought together residents, civic leaders, and then mayor Tom Tait. The event highlighted the potential of Little Arabia as a recognized ethnic district—drawing comparisons to established cultural hubs like Little Saigon and Little Tokyo.



## Los Angeles Times

CALIFORNIA

### Muslims and Arabs Seek New Profile

By Stanley Allison

June 6, 2004 12 AM PT

The leaders -- brainstorming in small groups, scribbling their ideas in colored inks on display boards and then comparing notes -- proposed several projects Saturday to elevate Arabs' and Muslims' presence in Anaheim.

A community center, they said, would benefit both youth and women, and be a place for recreation and voter registration.

They also suggested creating an official designation for Little Arabia and establishing an office of immigration affairs.

In 2010, seeking an official city designation, Rashad Al-Dabbagh and Omar Masry launched an advocacy and social media campaign to designate Little Arabia to draw public attention to the district.



In 2020, the Arab American Civic Council launched the #designateLittleArabia campaign, in an effort to put it on the Anaheim City Council's agenda.

# Advocacy for Little Arabia

After more than 18 years of back-and-forth between the community and the Anaheim City Council, Dr. José Moreno placed the Little Arabia district designation on the council agenda in 2022, paving the way for its official recognition.



After more than three decades of community building and activism, Little Arabia was officially designated on August 22, 2022.



| ANAHEIM   |    |                                  |                      |
|---|----|----------------------------------|----------------------|
|  |    |                                  |                      |
| YES   | NO | ABSTAIN                          | MEMBER               |
|   |    | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | Trevor O'Neill       |
| <input type="radio"/>   |    |                                  | Jose Diaz            |
| <input type="radio"/>   |    |                                  | Gloria Sahagun Ma'ae |
| <input type="radio"/>   |    |                                  | Jose F. Moreno       |
| <input type="radio"/>   |    |                                  | Avelino Valencia     |
| <input type="radio"/>   |    |                                  | Stephen Faessel      |



# Today's Little Arabia District

In January 2024, the Anaheim City Council voted to approve the installation of a Little Arabia freeway sign. On September 19, 2024, the sign was unveiled to the public and installed a couple of weeks later.



Little Arabia has become a space where the community can both celebrate and grieve—a place to be human.



Looking ahead, the district's future shines through public art, cultural events, and community tours.

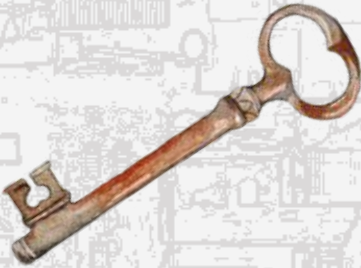


It stands as a beacon of California's ethnic diversity, offering Arab Americans a place where their identity is recognized, affirmed, and openly expressed.

# About the performers



The Palestine Foundation, in collaboration with SAWA, a Southern California Arab American mothers group, established the **Mawtini Choir**. This children's choir project focuses on teaching traditional and folk songs, including the associated Arabic language translation, pronunciation, and history, to children between the ages of 5 & 17. The choir aims to foster a sustainable fellowship of young artists who are proficient in various art forms like singing, traditional dance, playing musical instruments, and poetry. They provide instruction in vocal skills, Arabic pronunciation and vocabulary through songs and poetry, as well as playing traditional musical instruments, music theory, and folk dances.



Thanks Joey" (شكرًا) is a Los Angeles-based music producer, audio engineer, and DJ known for specializing in various genres including Hip-Hop, R&B, Reggaeton, Afropop, and Pop. He has released several albums and singles, including "Qahwah Con Leche", "Brown Kid", and "MAKTABA : Home Away From Home".







The name الأخبار (**Al-Akhbar**), meaning "The News" in Arabic, was chosen to transform the traditional notion of news as a bearer of sorrow into a messenger of celebration and togetherness. With their unique fusion of traditional Arabic maqam and jazz, Al-Akhbar is reshaping the SWANA music scene, pushing boundaries, and offering a fresh perspective on cultural expression.

**Mikel Albagdadi** is a comedian hailing from Louisiana, now making waves in Los Angeles. Known for his unique brand of humor, he skillfully weaves tales of his upbringing as an Arab American in the South into uproarious comedy. With credits including a role in the movie *The Hunt* and a recent appearance in the Netflix Original *Carry On* alongside Jason Bateman. Mikel Albagdadi is carving out a niche for himself in the entertainment industry, he has showcased his wit through his writing, contributing to publications such as *The Red Shtick*, *Neutral Ground*, and *Buzzfeed*.





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# About the organizer

Established in 2011, the Arab American Civic Council advances community power and grassroots democracy by moving people, organizations, and policy towards justice and equity. We envision an empowered Arab American community thriving in an America that is just and equitable for all.

**Our team come from different backgrounds but share the same vision to uplift our communities.**

**Rashad Al-Dabbagh** - Executive Director

**Hani Haidar** - Admin & Development Coordinator

**Amin Nash** - Policy & Research Coordinator

**Johanna Mustafa** - Operations Manager

**Ayah Shiadah** - Organizing Manager

**Aya Baazizi** - NNAAC Fellow

**Muntadhar Aljadeed** - NNAAC Fellow



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## Contact Info

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