

(about 1,400 inhabitants, of whom about 300 are migrants abroad) shares several features, both social and ecological, with villages of the Nablus, Hebron, Ramallah and Bethlehem mountains, and with the Judean hills in particular. Its main crop, olives, occupies village labour totally for two to three months every two years, during the picking and olive-pressing season. (Olives have a bi-annual cycle).

A substantial proportion of the village work force is employed in Israel (between 120-140 workers), and, like many Ramallah district villages a considerable number of men (but not their families) are migrant workers in the Gulf, South America, and West Germany.

Ras el-Tin, in common with several villages in the Bani Zeid region, is divided into two peasant factions: Baraghteh and Fallahin. The former were, until the end of Ottoman rule in Palestine, big landlords and tax-farmers, but have gradually lost their political influence and prestige. Their former status is still reflected today in the distribution of land parcels and in housing patterns. Although there is hardly any difference, for average households, in the size of agricultural plots between the two factions, the Baraghteh (who constitute about 25% of village households) still own the most fertile land in the valley which they seized, according to a story prevalent in the village, 80 years ago from the Fallahin after a faction of the Barghuti clan from Deir Ghassaneh sought "refugee" in Ras el-Tin following a blood feud. The dwellings of the Fallahin were also concentrated in two separate areas of the village, divided from their former landlords by a paved road in one case and agricultural plots in the other. Only at the entrance of the village do we observe newly established dwellings where the houses of the two factions intermingle. Those units, unlike the stone houses of the rest of the village, were built in the late sixties and early seventies