

Day One

Monday

VIP Arrival and Hotel Transfer

Welcome to Israel

Welcome home! A representative of the tour company will meet you as you disembark from the plane and streamline your visa and customs processing. You will be brought to a waiting VIP van which will bring you to your hotel.

Sleep in Tel AvivDay Two

Tuesday - Tel Aviv

(Guide and driver)

Machon Ayalon - Clandestine Bullet Factory

Just outside of Tel Aviv, on a small hill is located one of the State of Israel's best kept secrets. Now a museum, this former bullet factory was hidden under a laundromat on a kibbutz training facility and arguably saved the State of Israel. In 1943 as the War of Independence was approaching the *hagana* (the pre state army) desperately needed weapons and ammunition but the British ruled the land. This secret underground factory was established, and in 3 years produced over 2 million bullets under the nose of the British. It was so secret that for the next 30 years no one had even heard of it!

Old City of Jaffa

Tradition tells us that Jaffa, or *Yafo* as its called in Hebrew, was founded by *Yefet* the Son of Noah many, many years ago. Throughout history it's known as one of the most famous Middle Eastern ports and the one from which Jonah set forth on his famous voyage. Today its artists colony, alleyways, and views sets it apart as one of the most beautiful places in Tel Aviv. It's for this very reason that one can spot brides and grooms having their photoshoots on almost everyday of the week in Yafo.

Shuk HaCarmel - The Carmel Market & Nachalat Binyamin

There is no better place to get in touch with the *real* Tel Aviv than in it's most famous and vibrant market. There is never a dull moment when wandering through this dizzying array of fruits and spices, clothing and chotchkas, with local Tel Avivians just out for a snack. On Fridays Nachalat Binyamin Pedestrian becomes a must see artists' market with craftsmen and artists from all over Israel setting up booths and selling their crafts.

Sleep in Tel Aviv

Day Three

Wednesday - Galilee & Mediterranean Coast (Guide and driver)

Caesarea

This picturesque 2,000 year old port city was a dream of King Herod. The Caesarea port was an unparalleled feat of engineering and instrumental in solidifying trade agreements with the Roman Empire. It was at the time, one of the largest cities in the Roman Empire and the capital of Rome in Israel. We will visit the excavated hippodrome, theater and bathhouse. Once a symbol of Roman power, today Caesarea is a testament to the eventual victory of the Jews over Rome.

Haifa Bahai Gardens lookout

Over half a million visitors from around the world flock to Haifa to see the UNESCO World Heritage Site Bahai Gardens covering some 200,000 square meters and majestically cascading down 19 different terraces. Besides being a holy place for the Bahai, it is also the burial site for the Bab, the founder of the Bahai faith. It offers one of the most stunning views of Haifa from the Carmel Mountains.

Akko Old City and Knights Halls

On a small peninsula jutting out of Israel's northern coast, lies a walled port city that has almost 4,000 years of continual use. Although Akko has seen the Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, besides numerous other conquerors, its golden age was in the 12th century when it became one of the most important and wealthiest city of the Crusaders.

We will explore the walls and moats of Akko, as well as the newly uncovered Hospitallers fortress. We will go underground through tunnels and crypts going back in time 800 years to the age of knights and maidens.

If we have time we can explore the market and port and perhaps even walk on her ramparts!

Rosh Hanikra Grottoes & Cable Car

On Israel's northern border with Lebanon sits one of the most magnificent natural phenomena in Israel. We will take cable cars down to grottos that were carved into the mountainside over thousands of years by the beating waves of the Mediterranean Sea.

Sleep in Galilee

Day Four

Thursday - Galilee & Golan Heights (Guide and driver)

Golan Heights Jeep Adventure

There's practically no better way to see the beauty of the Golan Heights than by offroading with a local. On the shores of the Sea of Galilee we can find some of the most stunning views of valleys, canyons, and wildlife of all kinds. Although it's more than 200 meters below sea level, the *Kinneret* Basin is a tropical zone, with agriculture, fruit trees, streams that run year round, as well as a plethora of wild animals that we will search for as we drive through streams and pick the fruit.

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Tzfat Old City & Artist Quarter

In Judaism's most mystical book, the *Zohar*, Tzfat is described as having the purest air in all of Israel and that's not only because Tzfat is almost 3,000 feet in elevation. Of Judaism's four Holy Cities, Tzfat is the one described as *mystical* and connected to the element of air, that which is intangible... hidden. It is for this reason that 500 years ago Tzfat attracted mystics and rabbis, and built breathtaking synagogues which we will explore. In recent years Tzfat's beauty has attracted artists from all over who have opened their galleries to the public, making Tzfat a highlight of any trip to Israel.

Har Bental Viewpoint and Bunkers

We will climb up a dormant volcano to a height of 1,260 feet above sea level to take in a breathtaking 360 degree view of the Golan Heights. From this former Israeli defensive position we can look down into Syria and on a clear day even see the approaches to Damascus only 45 miles away. We can also climb through the decommissioned bunker and trenches of the IDF.

Golan Heights Winery & Wine Tasting

Just over 30 years ago a revolution took place in Israel... A wine revolution! Although Israel was famous in the ancient world for its extraordinary wines, the trade seemed to die with the withering of the Land of Israel throughout the long Jewish exile. Today Israel exports nearly 30 million dollars worth of wine and has been winning awards throughout the world!

The Golan Heights Winery led the charge in the rebirth of the Israeli wine industry. As the country's third largest winery and producing over 6 million bottles annually, the Golan Heights Winery was named World Winery of the Year in 2012 by Wine Enthusiast Magazine.

Sleep in Galilee

Day Five

Friday - Jordan Valley (Guide and driver)

Tiberias & Sea of Galilee

Resting on the Lake *Kinneret* and one of the four Holy Cities of Judaism, Tiberias is a 2,000 year old city both home to a vibrant Jewish community and the resting place of great rabbis. Besides the stunning views of the Golan Heights and upper Galilee, we will learn about Rabbi Akiva and Maimonides as Jewish history comes alive beneath our feet.

Gan Hashlosha

Gan Hashlosha, or *the Sachne* as the locals call it, was listed by Time magazine as one of the most beautiful places in Israel and one of the top 20 exotic places in the world. This natural thermal spring has a year-round water temperature of 82 degrees. These pools are a welcome relief to the temperature outside, whether it be hot or cold, swimming in this paradise is enjoyable year round.

Kasr Al Yahud - Jordan River

Nearly 3,400 years ago in this very place, the Children of Israel crossed over from the desert into the Land of Israel. Though the Jordan River is no longer split, only a few dozen feet away lies the modern country of Jordan. Just over the water, one can envision Elijah the Prophet's transcendental ascent from this world. Kasr al Yahud was opened to the public in 2011 just across from Jericho on the lush banks of Israel's longest river, the Jordan.

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Welcome to Jerusalem - Mount Scopus viewpoint

The rabbis of the Talmud state that Jerusalem is the highest place in the world because everyone "ascends" to Jerusalem. The spiritual plateau of the world is here in this most famous and yearned after city. As we enter Jerusalem we will breathe in her beauty from the Mount Scopus Viewpoint and recall the words of the sages that one "doesn't come to Jerusalem, rather they return to Jerusalem."

Night Recommendation - Shabbat at the Western Wall

Friday night is a special time to be in Jerusalem. As the day ends a new day begins - Shabbat. The Kotel in Jerusalem becomes a unifying place for the Jews as holiness of time and place intertwine. Soldiers and Hassids, tourists and locals, dance arm in arm to welcome the Jewish Sabbath with song and joy. This celebration has no parallel in the world and should not be missed.

Option for a guided visit to the Western Wall friday night

Sleep in Jerusalem

Day Six

Saturday - Jerusalem (Free Day)

Shabbat Rest

Take a day to recover from a hectic week of travel and touring. As the State of Israel takes a rest why not take this opportunity to visit one of Jerusalem's many synagogues, lay out by the pool, or stroll through one of the many parks Jerusalem has to offer.

Option for a walking tour of Jerusalem

Four Quarters Walking Tour

From the Hotel we will ascend on foot to the Old City Via the Jaffa Gate, passing through Jerusalem's oldest and most picturesque neighborhood outside the Old City's walls, Yemin Moshe. Besides being Judaism's **holiest** city, it is a holy city to both Christianity and Islam. Today Jerusalem has four distinct areas colloquially called "the four quarters, the Jewish Quarter, Christian Quarter, Muslim Quarter, and Armenian Quarter. Together we will explore the hidden gems of this holy city, climb the rooftops, wander her alleys, and unlock her secrets.

Evening activity - Western Wall Tunnels - on your own

The Kotel Plaza today has an exposed section of 57 meters out of 488 meters of wall! Underneath the Muslim Quarter of today is the excavated sections of the Western Wall which were once open to the sky. Although the average stone in the wall is *only* 2-3 tons, we will see the largest stone that weighed a whopping 570 tons, making it one of the largest hewn stones in the world.

Sleep in Jerusalem

Day Seven

Sunday - Jerusalem (Guide and driver)

Ramparts Walk

We will walk from the Jaffa Gate on top of the old city's walls recounting the words of King David in Psalms

"Walk about Zion and encompass her, count her towers. Mark well in your hearts her ramparts, raise up her palaces, that you may tell it to subsequent generations."

City of David

Just outside of the Old City we will explore the ancient city where King David held his capital. Ir David, or the "City of David" as it is known in English, is the actual location of the biblical city of Jerusalem captured by King David over 3,000 years ago. Highlights include entering the secret tunnel leading to the Gihon Spring, walking through Hezekiah's water tunnel, the Olei Regalim street from the Shiloach Pool up to "Wall Street" the ancient financial district and shopping area.

Jewish Quarter

The Jewish Quarter has been home to Jews almost continuously for 2,700 years! Home today to nearly 3,300 residents it combines history, religion, and archeology as well as shops and restaurants, yeshivas and synagogues. Although there is a modern neighborhood on top of these ancient ruins, the stones come to life and whisper the prophecy of Zachariah that "there will once again sit old men and women in the squares of Jerusalem, and the streets will be filled with playing children".

The Kotel - Western Wall

If Jerusalem is the heart of the Jewish People than the Temple Mount and its western retaining wall are its soul. After the Temple's destruction in the year 70 CE, the Western Wall or *kotel*, is one of its last remaining walls. Today we only see a fraction of it exposed, yet it spans over a quarter of a mile and once stood, 20 stories high! Although made of limestone, local tradition holds that it is made of of the tears and prayers of 2,000 years of Jews yearning for "Next year in Jerusalem." According to Jewish thought this is the holiest place on earth and the entryway to the spiritual world.

Sleep in Jerusalem

Day Eight

Monday - Dead Sea (Guide and driver)

Masada

In the year 30 BCE King Herod built here his desert fortress par excellence. Perched on a mesa 450 meters above the Dead Sea yet only 58 meters above sea level, surrounded by four meter high double wall and steep cliffs, it was thought to be impregnable. Nearly 100 years after it was built the drama will unfold as the most famous battle in Israel; the last stand of the Jews in their Great Revolt against the Romans.

Ein Gedi National Park

We will visit this desert oasis where King David hid from his enemy Saul as recounted in the Bible in the Book of Samuel. Here we can do easy to difficult hikes through the beautiful Judean Desert, periodically stopping to dip in the cold water springs, and cool off under the waterfalls. It's not uncommon while hiking in this nature reserve to see wild ibex drinking from the stream, hyraxes climbing the trees, or eagles soaring overhead.

Dead Sea float

Have you ever wondered what it feels like to be weightless? Here in the lowest place on earth we have the saltiest lake in the world. The water is so dense it's impossible to sink. The waters of the Dead Sea have been known throughout antiquity to have healing qualities, and a day at the Dead Sea has the power to rejuvenate the skin. The hypersalinity and high mineral content have been shown to be therapeutic for arthritis, psoriasis, eczema, much much more.

Sleep in Jerusalem

Day Nine

Tuesday - Jerusalem (Guide and driver)

Yad Vashem - Israel's Holocaust Memorial

Yad Vashem was founded in 1953 as Israel's central holocaust memorial and museum. It's for this reason that, after the Kotel, it is Israel's most visited site. It is here where visitors will hear the story and the meaning of the holocaust within the greater story of the people of Israel and the Land of Israel. All political delegations that come to Israel must come to Yad Vashem to see for themselves what can happen when the Jews don't have a place to call home.

Mount Hertzl National Cemetery

Perched on one of the highest hills in western Jerusalem is our country's national cemetery. Buried at the buried, is the namesake of the mountain, Theodore Hertzl, the founder of modern Zionism. Flanking Hertzl are Presidents and Prime Ministers, on a foundation of our boys...IDF soldiers who have fallen in battle. No nation is given it's land on a silver platter; those who sacrificed their lives are here as a monument to the struggle for our homeland.

Knesset

Israel's Knesset or parliament is made of 120 elected lawmakers who toil day and night for the State of Israel. We will stop by the outside of the building where we can see the Menorah the symbol of the State of Israel. This menorah was made in 1966 and is an amazing work of art comprised of 30 relief engravings creating a visual textbook of the History of the Jewish People.

Machane Yehuda Shuk - Jerusalem Market

There are no words to accurately describe the "shuk"...one must immerse themselves in the sights, smells, and above all, tastes of Jerusalem's largest outdoor food market. It teems with locals and tourists alike, and is a meeting place for the Jerusalmmites from all over. Make sure to taste the *chalva*, *techina*, the famous marzipan *rugalach*, and get a fresh Juice from Uzi.

Sleep in Jerusalem

Day Ten

Wednesday - Gush Etzion & Hebron (Guide and driver)

Herodion

2,000 years ago atop a mountain on the edge of the Judean Desert, at the site where he wanted to be buried, King Herod built a summer palace par excellence. Atop this artificial mountain sits an architectural marvel that still inspires wonder today.

We will see the recently excavated and reconstructed site of King Herod's grave, as well as his private palace and theater. In two successive wars with the Romans Jewish rebels commandeered this site and dug escape tunnels as well as a synagogue which stood at the same time as the Second Temple, making it one of the oldest synagogues in the world!

Hebron

3,800 years ago the biblical patriarch Abraham made the first Jewish acquisition of land in the Land of Israel for his descendants. Ever since then, *Mea'arat HaMachpela* or the Tomb of the Patriarchs has been a site of pilgrimage and prayer for the children of Avraham and Sara and the city of Hebron is waiting with open arms. At the tombs of the matriarchs and patriarchs of Judaism we will be embraced with holiness and awed by the beauty of this thousands year old shrine.

Tomb of Rachel

The Rabbinic tradition tells us that Rachel was buried on the road by Bethlehem so that when the Jews would be going into exile, they would be consoled by the hope that Rachels prayers can guarantee their return. In the place where Benjamin was born and Rachel died, King David and the seeds of the messiah will sprout. There is a special power at the Tomb of Rachel to pray for the ingathering of the Jewish People.

Sleep in Jerusalem

Day Eleven

Thursday - L'hitroot (driver)

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VIP Transfer and Departure

In Israel we dont say goodbye we say l'hitraot...that means "see you later"

A representative of our company will bring you to Ben Gurion Airport and streamline your flight check-in and departure. Looking forward to next time!

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