

Israel Trip – February 6-16, 2023

DAY 1: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6TH 2023 | THE JOURNEY BEGINS

Depart from USA for your overnight flight to Israel. Meals served on board.

DAY 2: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7TH 2023 | ARRIVE TO ISRAEL

Bruchim Habaim! Welcome to Israel! Upon landing, you will be met by a representative who will assist you through and expedite the passport control, customs and luggage process. Once you have finished at the airport, you will meet your driver and be transferred to your hotel to check in, freshen up and relax. Spend the first day in leisure as you catch up on some rest after the long flights. **Overnight at Leonardo Plaza Hotel in Jerusalem (5 nights).**

DAY 3: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8TH 2023 | BIBLICAL JERUSALEM

Explore the impressive excavations in the Davidson Center where we'll be able to transport ourselves 2000 years back in time and walk on the very stones that visitors would have walked on in the time of the Second Temple.

We'll pause at the Western Wall (also known as the Wailing Wall) to soak up the atmosphere, and continue underground as we come as close as humanly possible to the Holy of Holies while exploring the Rabbinical Tunnels.

Head up to the Jewish Quarter and after a great local lunch visit the Burnt house and the Herodian Quarter in order to get the full picture of Jewish lives here during the time of the 2nd Temple. **Overnight at Leonardo Plaza Hotel in Jerusalem**

DAY 4: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9TH 2023 | REVOLUTION IN THE WILDERNESS

Our day will begin at the Ein Gedi desert oasis. We'll take a short walk in this marvel of nature and will pause by one of the waterfalls to discuss Saul and David's meeting here.

Our next stop will be the UNESCO World Heritage Site Masada. After a quick lunch we'll ascend by cable car and will explore the ruins of this remarkable desert fortress built by King Herod 2000 years ago, and discover the tragic end of its final defense. After all that walking, we'll relax at a private Dead Sea beach for some well-earned down time. Float on these saline waters and you'll come out rejuvenated – guaranteed!

As we head back to Jerusalem, our final stop will be at Genesis Land to transport ourselves back into the Biblical wilderness for a meeting with Abraham. We'll learn about life in the desert in ancient times and have the opportunity to ride a camel into the sunset.

Stop at the Mt. Scopus observation and take in the beautiful scenery of Jerusalem for the first time together as a group, get some beautiful pictures and say a short Shehechyanu prayer together.

Overnight at Leonardo Plaza Hotel in Jerusalem

DAY 5: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10TH 2023 | BAR MITZVA & MODERN JERUSALEM

The special day is here – mazal tov! Our B'nai Mitzvah will feel like stars as they enter the Old City accompanied by drummers & shofar blowers as we head to the egalitarian section of the Western Wall. We will be met by our very own Rabbi Mark Blazer who will accompany the B'nai Mitzvah and all of us through this most special ceremony.

We'll continue our day with a visit to the world-class Israel Museum, home of the Dead Sea Scrolls. We'll use the museum's models and displays to trace our footsteps around Jerusalem.

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Our day ends with a special visit to Yad Vashem, Israel's national Holocaust Memorial. Here we'll participate in a special program designed especially for a day like this as we adopt Jewish teens from the time of the Holocaust and embark on a unique journey through time and space.

Following a break at the hotel to shower and change, in the evening return to the Western Wall plaza to experience the joyous 'Receiving the Shabbat' Jewish prayer service. Continue for a traditional Shabbat dinner at the hotel led by Rabbi Mark Blazer. **Overnight at the Leonardo Plaza in Jerusalem.**

DAY 6: SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11TH 2023 | SHABBAT IN JERUSALEM

Shabbat in Jerusalem is special. Start the morning later by attending prayers at the close by Hebrew Union College, followed by lunch.

Enjoy the rest of the day in leisure.

Optional: Those who wish may join a walking tour of the Muslim & Christian quarters of the Old City followed by a short visit to Bethlehem.

As Evening approaches, gather as a group and enjoy a joyous Havdalah ceremony followed by an evening out to the Ben Yehuda street or the Machne Yehuda Market. **Overnight at the Leonardo Plaza in Jerusalem.**

DAY 7: SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12TH 2023 | HEADING NORTH

Following check out, drive north through the Jordan valley, part of which is in the West bank. We'll use the driving time to get a better understanding of the political situation in the West Bank and Israel's relationship with Jordan.

Visit the ancient Greco-Roman city of Beit-She'an and witness the amazing theatre, markets and bathhouses available here. This used to be one of the largest cities in this area and played a major role during the Jewish Great Revolt.

Continue to Tiberias and visit the Tomb of Rabbi Maimonides as we learn more about one of the most famous Rabbis in history. End the day with a visit to the famed Hamat Tiberias and the ancient synagogue discovered on site. Witness how Judaism adjusts to the foreign rule of the time. **Overnight at the Leonardo Plaza in Tiberias (3 nights).**

DAY 8: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13TH 2023 | SPIRITUALITY IN NORTHERN ISRAEL

We'll begin our day at Tzipori, the former Roman capital of the Galilee. We'll walk its ancient stones and marvel at its stunning mosaics. Tzipori plays an important role in Judaism as the home of the codification of the Mishnah (the Jewish oral law).

Continue our day with a visit to Safed (Tzfat), one of Judaism's four holy cities. We'll wander its ancient alleyways and discover the secrets of the Kabbalah (Jewish Mysticism) which developed here 500 years ago. Expect beautiful synagogues, stunning vistas, and remarkable tales.

End the day with a relaxed boat cruise on the Sea of Galilee, enjoy an opportunity to simply be on the world lowest fresh water lake. **Overnight at the Leonardo Plaza in Tiberias (3 nights).**

DAY 9: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14TH 2023 | NORTHERN BORDERS NOW & THEN

We'll begin with a visit to Capernaum, where a young Rabbi named Jesus made his home following his expulsion from Nazareth. We'll see the house it is believe he lived in, and the ruins of a remarkable synagogue.

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Continue to Tel Dan, where we'll be able to discover remarkable Biblical ruins as well as look out over the Lebanese border. Continuing on the Biblical theme, we'll go further into the Golan Heights, and stop at the ancient pagan worship site of Caesarea Philippi, where Jesus gave Peter his name. This evocative location, surrounded by a free-flowing spring and lush greenery, is a great place to reflect and is commonly referred to as the Niagara Falls of Israel.

After lunch in the renowned HaBokrim steakhouse, we'll ascend to an observation deck near the Syrian border. Our view will look out towards where Saul of Tarsus saw Jesus on the road to Damascus, and give us an opportunity to get an understanding of the complex relationship between contemporary Israel and Syria.

We'll end our day by raising a glass to our trip during a visit to one of the best boutique wineries in Israel for a short tour and tasting. **Overnight at the Leonardo Plaza in Tiberias (3 nights).**

DAY 10: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15TH 2023 | ISRAEL'S COASTLINE

Following check out, we'll start our day in the beautiful seaside grottoes of Rosh Hanikra, right on the Lebanese border.

Our next stop will be in Akko (Acre), the former Crusader capital and home to the remarkable ruins and tunnels from the time of the Crusaders, which earned Akko UNESCO world heritage site status.

We'll continue south to Haifa, Israel's third biggest city, and home to the world center of the Baha'i faith. From a vantage point on Mount Carmel, we'll look down over their stunning gardens and enjoy the view over the Mediterranean.

Next stop is Caesarea, the regional capital that was built by King Herod the Great two thousand years ago. We'll explore the spectacular ruins, and understand the contribution of Caesarea to the Great Jewish Revolt.

Overnight at Tal on the Beach Hotel in Tel Aviv (1 night).

DAY 11: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16TH 2023 | TEL AVIV, FAREWELLS AND FLIGHTS

Our last day focuses on Tel Aviv. Visiting the Palmach Museum really sheds light on the aches and troubles that establishing the modern state of Israel came with. Head into modern Tel Aviv, exploring the early neighborhoods such as Rothschild Boulevard, and discover the story of the pioneers who helped build this city, and country, from sand dunes into skyscrapers.

Enjoy some time to wander in the Carmel Market and find your own lunches as well as some last minute shopping before we head to Jaffa.

Jaffa is one of the most ancient port cities in the world. After wandering the quaint alleyways of this timeless gateway to the Holy Land, we'll descend to the port where Jonah was swallowed by the whale. Here we will summarize our visit before heading to the Maganda restaurant located nearby for our last meal together.

Lehitra'ot! See you later! Following dinner, you will be transferred to Ben-Gurion airport where a representative will assist you through the check-in process to ensure you are on time for your flight. While your journey home will begin, remember that you always have another home here.