



COJECO BluePrint Fellowship jumps into the groove! Negev desert, Dec 2014



## *The World is your classroom!*

*Upcoming Traveling University Tours\**



### **EASTERN EUROPE**

*with Prof. Stephen Berk*

June 16 - 28, 2015

June 12 - 24, 2016



### **THE BALTICS & POLAND**

*with Prof. Natan Meir*

June 21 - July 3, 2015



### **INSIDERS TOUR TO POLAND**

*with Rabbi Haim Beliak*

July 2 - 14, 2015



### **HONORING THE KINDERTRANSPORT**

*with Prof. Jeremy Leigh*

July 4 - 17, 2015



### **ITALY**

*with Prof. Stephen Berk*

July 5 - 16, 2015



### **CHINA**

*with Prof. Fred Lazin*

Oct 18 - 30, 2015 (with Hong Kong Extension)



### **SOUTH AMERICA CRUISE**

*with Rabbi Sam Kieffer*

Jan 3 - 18, 2016

HADASSAH



**HADASSAH**

It feels good to be home! All of us at Ayelet Tours are beaming with pride at the announcement of our programs and continued partnership with our dear friends at Hadassah. Hadassah is the largest Jewish organization in America, and among the largest Women's organizations in the world, counting over 330,000 women (and men!) as members. Together we have sent literally thousands of people to Israel on life-changing specialty missions and tours for doctors, nurses, associates, donors, innovators, Hadassah regions and more. At this printing, we are hard at work planning tours and missions for 2015/2016 and beyond.

Check [www.ayelet.com](http://www.ayelet.com) for updates as new and innovative programs become available for booking.

## *Celebrate your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah in Israel!*



The perfect way to mark your simcha - Celebrating in Israel!

Bar/Bat Mitzvah DATES	Tour Ends	Extension Ends
<b>2015</b>		
Feb. 12, 2015	Feb. 23, 2015	Feb. 27, 2015
Jun. 18, 2015	Jun. 29, 2015	Jul. 3, 2015
Jul. 2, 2015	Jul. 13, 2015	Jul. 17, 2015
Aug. 20, 2015	Aug. 31, 2015	Sept. 4, 2015
Dec. 20, 2015	Jan. 1, 2016	Jan. 5, 2016
Dec. 24, 2015	Jan. 4, 2016	Jan. 8, 2016
<b>2016</b>		
Feb. 11, 2016	Feb. 22, 2016	Feb. 26, 2016
Private tours with custom itineraries can be arranged for your family. See rates & full itinerary at <a href="http://www.ayelet.com">www.ayelet.com</a> or contact Ayelet Tours at 800-237-1517 for details!		

\* Visit [www.ayelet.com](http://www.ayelet.com) for details & pricing.

## As time goes by...

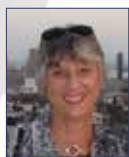
In the summer of 1989, just three years after I founded Ayelet Tours, we watched with pride as our son, Jeff, celebrated his Bar Mitzvah on Masada. (Some of you may know him!)

In February 2015, over 25 years later, we celebrated the B'nai Mitzvah of two of our grandchildren at Hebrew Union College, overlooking the walls of Jerusalem's Old City. Eliana (my daughter Stacy's oldest) and Danny (my daughter Jodi's youngest) led Kabbalat Shabbat services, read beautifully from the Torah, and impressed us all with their maturity, dedication and poise. (A bubbe can brag!)

I marvel at the years that have passed between these two events - life spins by so quickly. As my husband Ira is fond of saying - these life cycle events, much like experiential travel, stand as punctuation marks that help prevent life from being one long run-on sentence.

Celebrating your child or grandchild's B'nai Mitzvah in Israel is an opportunity to reach the potential of this coming of age rite. This is L'Dor V'Dor, from generation to generation, come to life. It highlights the importance of connection - to Judaism, to Israel as a land and a people, and to each other as a family.

I invite you to join us in Israel, to share these magical experiences as a family, and to make memories together that will last forever.



Shalom,

**Diane Rubtchinsky**  
President

## What our travelers are saying...

*This was truly the best trip/tour we've ever taken (my husband's words as well as mine)! Our guide, was absolutely amazing - his knowledge of Jewish, Christian, historical and archeological sites was incredible, and he shared just enough for us to retain much of what we saw without overwhelming us!*

- Alice G.  
Israel Tour - Oct 2014

*This was a wonderful trip from beginning to end. I was very impressed with the organization of the trip. Every detail was attended to. The guides were superb. [Tour Escort] Irina was a standout. She took care of everything, from hotel check-in to making sure that our time was used to maximal efficiency. The hotels were fantastic, especially the Bristol in Warsaw. I would also like to mention the private Chopin concert. What a nice touch. We all loved it. Probably no need to mention Professor Berk, but he is clearly an outstanding talent.*

- Gila & Bruce G  
Prof Berk E. Europe Tour - Nov 2014



## Honoring the Kindertransport A tour of Europe in July 2015

Article by K2 Rachel Rubin-Green

On a recent bicycle tour of the Netherlands, I asked myself "Is this view; the flower fields, the canals, the windmills, the narrow brick buildings, what my mother saw out the train window when she left Germany on the Kindertransport?" And the thought of a tour, primarily by rail, that followed a route of the Kindertransports started to take shape.

Kindertransports, German for "Children's Trains" rescued about 10,000 Jewish children from Nazi occupied Europe between December 1938 and September 1939, when war began. Many people and organizations cooperated in the Kindertransport effort. Children boarded transports in Berlin, Vienna and Prague, and some other cities. Children from smaller towns, like my mother, went to these cities to begin their journeys. They went by train to the Hook of Holland and then by ferry to Harwich, England. Then another train took them to London. Refugee organizations in Great Britain helped to arrange housing in boarding schools or private homes. Many children saved by the Kindertransports never saw their parents again, although some, like my mother, did.

I felt that a tour following the route of the Kindertransport would give me a greater appreciation for this particular aspect of my mother's life experience. So I contacted Ayelet. Viola! More information about the tour is available at [www.ayelet.com/KindertransportJuly2015.aspx](http://www.ayelet.com/KindertransportJuly2015.aspx). We'll be accompanied by Jewish History and travel expert, scholar in residence **Prof. Jeremy Leigh**. For anyone with interest about the Kindertransports, I invite you to join this extraordinary experience!

## SHALOM, RABBI!

## Bring your Congregation to

## ISRAEL in Feb 2016

## & Travel FREE!

Contact [jeff@ayelet.com](mailto:jeff@ayelet.com) for details.



# Conferences

*Ayelet Tours is proud to be the most trusted name in Jewish conference coordination.*

## Upcoming conferences include:



**Central Conference of American Rabbis**  
March 15 - 18, 2015: Philadelphia, PA



**Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association**  
March 15-18, 2015: Toronto, Canada



**Cantors Assembly**  
May 3-8, 2015: Rosemont (Chicago), IL



**American Conference of Cantors/  
Guild of Temple Musicians**  
June 28-July 2, 2015: Ft. Lauderdale, FL

## ACC Israel 2014

What do you get when you bring 100 cantors to Israel? One melodic mission! In June 2014, over **100 members of the American Conference of Cantors**, along with 150 congregants from across North America (and another 20 from Australia!) traveled to Israel with Ayelet Tours. They brought the beauty of their song to the people of Eretz Yisrael. The mission featured moving concerts, cross cultural outreach, study, touring, and even a flash mob in the heart of Tel Aviv! Special thanks to the ACC's Rachel Roth, Cantor David Berger and Cantor Lauren Bandman, along with the rest of the planning committee and concert chairs for their vision and leadership in bringing this mission from dream to reality. See you all in Florida in June!

## Conferences Are We!

While Ayelet Tours is best known for helping travelers explore and discover destinations throughout the world, we also offer conference planning expertise to many organizations in the United States, Israel, Eastern Europe, Spain, Germany, and beyond. Ayelet's Conference Services division prides itself on customer service and attention to detail for meetings of all sizes. It is our mission to assist our clients in creating and executing successful events by focusing on the site selection, planning, housing, registration processing, accounting, VIP management, on-site execution and more. Our services allow our clients to focus on what is most important - the program content itself. We provide the behind the scenes help and conference coordination that results in stress-free and memorable events.

We begin this year looking forward to many busy months of outstanding conferences. These include the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) meeting in Philadelphia in March, The Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association (RRA) meeting in Toronto in March, The Cantors Assembly (CA) in Chicago in May and the American Conference of Cantors (ACC) in Ft. Lauderdale in June.

For information on how we can help you execute flawless meetings, please contact Susan Feldman, Conference Services Manager, at [susanf@ayelet.com](mailto:susanf@ayelet.com) or 1-800-237-1517, ext. 318. We look forward to your call!

## Ayelet's January 2015 Clergy Familiarization Tour to Israel

In January 2015, Ayelet hosted a group of clergy for a study trip to Israel in conjunction with Makor, the educational travel division of our partner IGT.

Titled "Creativity in Innovation", the trip focused on individuals and places in Israel that show the depth and breadth of contemporary Israeli creativity, some new and some known, but all with a deeper story to tell. Our group visited places like Google Lab Tel Aviv, Beer Sheva's Saroka Hospital, and new excavations in Jerusalem's Old City. We met with Gaza border communities, and scholars like Rachel Korazim, Paul Liptz, and Alick Isaacs (author of a Prophetic Peace). We held high level discussions with Palestinian and Israeli journalists, the IMPJ, HUC rabbinic students, and the Israel Religious Action Center. We enjoyed an amazing evening at the Beresheet resort in Mitzpeh Ramon, with an early morning jeep ride...and even got to experience snow in Jerusalem!

Most of all, it was our pleasure to host such an outstanding group of people, committed to Israel and to sharing its triumphs, challenges, nuances, love of life and desire for Peace. The group was escorted by our own Seffie Epstein, who now represents Ayelet in Israel full time from his base in Jerusalem.





Travel with the legendary Prof. Berk to Poland, Germany, Italy and more!

**Dr. Stephen Berk**, who after working with us for more than 20 years needs no introduction, will be our scholar in Residence on two exciting tours this summer.

The first is to the Jewish heartland in **east central Europe, June 16 – 28, 2015**. We will visit Warsaw, Krakow, Prague and Budapest, cities that possessed, before WWII, vibrant and creative Jewish communities. We'll learn about prominent Jewish religious and secular personalities as well as important movements and parties. The destruction of these centers of Jewish life and the attempts to revive them after the Holocaust will be examined. Please note that when we are in Warsaw, we shall visit the magnificent new museum dedicated to the history of Jews in Poland. The trip also has an **optional extension to Dresden and Berlin, June 28 to July 3, 2015**. Both cities are rich in historical content. For anyone interested in the history of the Jewish people, the visit to Germany and Europe will be fascinating.

The second excursion is to beautiful **Italy, July 5 – 16, 2015**. We shall go to **Rome, Florence, Venice, Siena, Pompeii and travel along the Amalfi coast**. In Italy, Jewish history ranges from persecution to accommodation and assimilation. During the Renaissance, Italian Jewry was probably the most creative Jewish community in the world. To see the work of Da Vinci and Michelangelo is to appreciate some of the greatest achievements of western civilization. And then there is Venice! Venice is unlike any other city on the planet. And, everyone should see Venice at least once in his or her lifetime. **We invite you to join Dr. Berk for an adventure in learning and enjoying!**



Trevi Fountain - Rome, Italy

# Introducing...



## Best-Day Adventures; a new division of Ayelet Tours

Welcome to Best-Day Adventures, the newest endeavor of Ayelet Tours, serving **single Jewish travelers in their 40s, 50s and 60s**. Here you will find a series of highly organized, destination-oriented travel packages where group camaraderie, participation, choices and lots fun are in order.

Our trips are chock full of **interesting sights, great people and an enhanced activity program** to give you an "above and beyond" experience...icebreakers, special events, dining arrangements, organized tours, travel assistance, custom gifts and lots more. Our mantra "...the Best Day of your trip...so far." is meant to express our ultimate goal of providing you with a travel experience that will be etched in your heart forever.

**Bill Cartiff, our tour leader**, brings 22 years of Jewish singles tour leadership experience. Since 1993, Bill has led tours – specifically for the Jewish singles demographic – across the globe, touching all seven continents. He has traveled the world – to India, Israel, Africa, Vietnam, Brazil and even Spitsbergen (the Arctic) and Antarctica - but his favorite destination of all is Alaska.

Best-Day Adventures' summer 2015 trip is to "parts unknown" in **Alaska**; a journey that is 15 years in the making. Bill will be leading this incredible tour for a group of no more than 20 passengers; an exclusive opportunity! Also coming up in April/May, is a tour of **Israel** that will touch the heart & soul of first time and repeat visitors alike.

Each trip is unique, but what remains consistent is our commitment to provide all of our guests an unparalleled travel experience. Our expertise in planning with single Jewish travelers in mind, coupled with our decades of experience and our passion for sharing that expertise with you, will make every day...the Best-Day of your trip...so far.

For more information on what Best-Day Adventures is all about, and upcoming trips, email us at:  
**info@bestdayadventures.com.**



## JOIN THE CANTORS ASSEMBLY FOR THE SEPHARDIC SOUNDS OF SPAIN

In July 2016, the CA will bring alive the voices of the past on their musical mission to SPAIN. The tour will feature moving concerts, in-depth touring and scholarly insight. Travel abroad never sounded so good!

See [ayelet.com](http://ayelet.com) for details!



## Ayelet Down Under

Article by Ayelet Tour Escort Gail Waxman

Ayelet's Dec 2014 tour to Australia and New Zealand was the experience of a lifetime.

Our first stop was Auckland, a beautiful city full of friendly and warm New Zealanders. While there, we visited Rotorua and learned about the Maori people, then headed onward to Queenstown to view the beautiful Milford Sound. Some of us were even adventurous enough to try hang gliding and skydiving! Our last stop in New Zealand was Christchurch, where we marked Shabbat and were welcomed by members of the local congregation for services.

Next we were off to Sydney, Australia. Pictured above is the group with the famous Sydney Opera House and Harbor Bridge in the backdrop. We celebrated Chanukah together each night and sang songs that participant Cantor Neil Newman prepared for us. After Sydney, we traveled to Cairns to experience the Great Barrier Reef, followed by Ayers Rock, and finally Melbourne. We truly enjoyed the Jewish life in Melbourne - Shabbat dinner and services were some of the highlights of our incredible Jewish journey through New Zealand and Australia!

Our Dec 2016 Australia/New Zealand trip is already in the works. Check [www.ayelet.com](http://www.ayelet.com) for details!

## Fill Your Memory Bank...

Recently, my wife Julie and I enjoyed two awe-inspiring weeks hiking in Patagonia, at the southern tip of Argentina and Chile - it was glorious. We saw spectacular viewpoints, walked on breathtaking glaciers, encountered amazing wildlife and discovered ancient cave art. Somewhere along the trail I was reminded of the adage I share with others as I plan their tours to Israel and other destinations worldwide - **Travel is the only thing you buy that makes you richer.**

These experiences, be it hiking through Patagonia, or up Masada, or hearing the horn announcing the arrival of Shabbat in Jerusalem, or wine tasting in the Golan, or collecting fruits for Israel's needy... **these are the moments that fill up our lives - the memories we recall with great joy.** There is simply nothing more valuable. How lucky we are in the travel industry, to be able to help others create these memories! As we start 2015 - our 29th year coordinating travel worldwide - we want to say thank you. Thank you for the opportunity to fulfill our mission, and share our love for Israel and the wider world with you - our clients, our partners, our friends.

Inside this issue of Ayelet's World, you'll find many new ways to visit **Israel**, including a Jewish Singles tour, part of our new Best-Day Adventures Tour Series - focusing on Single Travelers in their 40s, 50s and 60s. You'll find Traveling University tours to **Eastern Europe, Italy, China, the Baltics** and more. You'll see a trip this summer to Europe for Kindertransport descendents - tracing their train ride to freedom, over 75 years ago, from mainland Europe to England. These will be moving, in some cases life changing, experiences for those that join. All of us at Ayelet Tours are here to help you invest in memories - **and may the banks of your memory overflow!**



Shalom,

**Jeff Rubtchinsky**  
Vice President

## Did you know? Ayelet's tours are IVY LEAGUE!



We are proud to coordinate graduate and undergraduate tours to Israel for **Harvard Law, Yale** and **UPenn**, as well as **West Point, Georgetown, Brandeis** and many more!



## Poland & The Baltics



with scholar  
Prof. Natan Meir

Natan Meir has been traveling to Eastern Europe from the time he spent his junior year abroad living with a Russian-Jewish family in St. Petersburg, when he was, as they say, "bitten by the Slavic bug." Since then, he has returned to the region regularly to do research – his field of expertise is East European Jewish history – and is delighted to be serving as a scholar-in-residence for Ayelet tours.

His **June 21 – July 3, 2015 tour of Warsaw and the Baltics** will have participants experiencing the newly opened core exhibit of the **Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw**, as well as the important Jewish centers of **Lodz, Lublin, Vilnius** (known as Vilna to most Jews), and Riga, with an optional **extension to St. Petersburg**. "This trip will take our travelers to some of the most significant Jewish communities in the former Pale of Settlement," explained Meir. "Even for those who have visited Eastern Europe before, the new museum in Warsaw and cities like Lodz and Vilna are must-sees."

Born in Jerusalem, the multilingual Meir (he is now fluent in six languages) was raised in Israel, New Jersey, and Quebec and now lives in Oregon, where he serves as director of the Judaic Studies Program at Portland State University. He has co-edited a volume on pogroms, and his first book, *Kiev, Jewish Metropolis: A History, 1859-1917*, is a history of the Jewish community of tsarist-era Kiev. He is currently at work on a study of the *hekdesch*, the Jewish poorhouse of Eastern Europe, and its residents, the "cast-outs" of Jewish society.



***We look forward to a wonderful year traveling with you!***  
- The Ayelet Tours Team



## ***Upcoming Tours for Jewish Singles in their 40s, 50s & 60s with Bill Cartiff***

### **Journey to Israel**

First-time & return travelers **with Eilat/Petra Extension**  
**April 25 - May 6, 2015**

### **National Parks of Alaska**

Experience the natural splendor of this region's beauty  
**July 3 -15, 2015**

### **New Year's Eve Caribbean Cruise**

Ring in the new year with fun in the sun!  
**Dec 26, 2015 - Jan 2, 2016**



*These are the letters we work so hard for...thank you to Channa and her family for allowing us to help her Make-A-Wish of visiting Israel come true!*

Hi Jean/Ayelet Tours,

I don't even know where to begin. To say that our trip exceeded expectations is an understatement. To start with, our guide Aaron was the best of the best...So many beautiful places that were backed by such moving stories. These stories were even more meaningful because they were being brought to life by a man so filled with passion and love for his people and his country. The hotels, bus driver, Channa's gifts, birthday celebration. Everything, top notch!!!

My only complaint? Having to leave! Again, we cannot thank you all enough for giving my family such memories. Most of all, my daughter is ready for her future in Israel!

Many thanks,  
*Ben, Kelley, Max and Channa*

