

Temple Israel of the City of New York

BACK TO ISRAEL

Whether You've Been There or Not

MARCH 15-28, 2018*

*First Timers Pre-Tour, March 13-16

Join Rabbi David & Kathy Gelfand

ISRAEL @ 70!

Remembering Yesterday,
Celebrating Today & Tomorrow

(As of 11-1-17)



Day A: Tuesday, March 13, 2018: PRE-TOUR DEPARTURE

- We depart on an afternoon flight to Israel (or arrive prior) to be ready for noon Wednesday touring!

Day B: Wednesday, March 14, 2018: PRE-TOUR – JERUSALEM OF GOLD

- We arrive in Israel by early a.m. and are met by an Ayelet Tours representative.
- We transfer to **Jerusalem**, stopping at the **Haas Promenade** to say a special “Shehecheyanu” as we look out over the **City of Gold** for the first time.
- Check in to the Inbal Hotel.
- Lunch (on own) in the **Old City** and spend the afternoon touring Jerusalem, including the ancient **Ir David** archaeological site to understand the **City of King David**.
- Next, we visit the **Hutzot Hayotzer, Arts & Crafts Lane** opposite the Old City, with leading artists and artisans.
- **Special briefing** by our guide on current affairs.
- Wander through the shops on **Ben Yehuda Street** pedestrian mall.
- This evening, we enjoy dinner (on own) on our first night in Israel.

Overnight in Jerusalem



Day C: Thursday, March 15, 2018: DISCOVERING JERUSALEM

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- This morning, we set out on a **walking tour** in the **Old City**, where we visit the **Jewish quarter** and the **Arab market (shuk)**. We also visit and tour the **Burnt House** to reach back to Roman times.
- Explore the **Western Wall (Kotel)** area.
- We tour the **Western Wall tunnels**, where we discover the archaeological wonders that once remained untouched for centuries.
- Continue to **Yad Vashem**, Israel's memorial to the Holocaust, for an eye opening experience. We view the many moving exhibitions, including the Hall of Names and the Avenue of the Righteous Among the Nations.
- We stop at the **Supreme Court** for a tour (time permitting) and continue to the **Knesset** to see the famous bronze menorah sculpture.
- Spend the evening at leisure discovering Jerusalem and enjoying dinner on own.

Day 1: Thursday, March 15, 2018: MAIN TOUR DEPARTURE

- Participants for the Main Tour depart NYC on their overnight flight, arriving Friday afternoon in Israel (or arrive in Israel earlier on their own).

Overnight in Jerusalem

Day D: Friday, March 16, 2018: MASADA & THE DEAD SEA and MAIN TOUR BEGINS

PRE-TOUR PARTICIPANTS:

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel, departing for **Masada** to see the remains of King Herod's fortress and learn about the Jewish Zealots' last stand against the Roman forces.
- We descend the mountain and head to the beach for an unsinkable float/swim in the healing, salty waters of the **Dead Sea**.
- Travel to **Tel Aviv** to meet the group arriving from the USA.



Day 2: Friday March 16, 2018: MAIN TOUR PARTICIPANTS ARRIVE IN ISRAEL

- We arrive in Israel this afternoon and are met by an Ayelet Tours representative.
- We transfer from Ben Gurion Airport to David Intercontinental Hotel in **Tel Aviv** for check in, to meet the pre-tour participants and to refresh.
- As the sun begins to set over Israel, we enjoy **Shabbat services** at nearby **Beit Daniel**, the first Progressive congregation of Tel Aviv, followed by **Shabbat dinner** in Old Jaffa.

Overnight in Tel Aviv



Day 3: Saturday, March 17, 2018: THE FLOURISHING ARTISTIC SIDE OF TEL AVIV

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We begin with a tour of the newly renovated **Museum of the Jewish People**, followed by a visit to the acclaimed **Tel Aviv Museum of Art** for a glimpse into some of the newest and trendiest art in the world today.
- Visit **Bialik Street** for a **walking tour** through part of the White City to see the Bauhaus architecture.
- Next, we enjoy a **graffiti tour** of a changing Tel Aviv neighborhood leading us to then wander the streets of the **Neve Tzedek Quarter**, a rebuilt neighborhood with amazing cafes, galleries, shops and the **Gutman Museum** (where one finds lunch - on own).
- Afternoon at leisure discovering Tel Aviv or Jaffa on own, or relaxing on the beautiful Mediterranean beach by the hotel. Try a Segway or bicycle tour (on own).
- This evening, we head out on the town for a slice of culture of a different kind at “**Dinner in the Dark**”, a tantalizing experience that will trigger all of your senses, followed by a performance of “**Not by Bread Alone**” at the **Nalagaat Center for the Deaf & Blind**.



Overnight in Tel Aviv

Day 4: Sunday, March 18, 2018: FROM HI-TECH TO HIGH FASHION

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- This morning, we visit the **Taglit Innovation Center** for a glimpse into Israel’s hi-tech advances in the fields of science, medicine, security and space. We visit the interactive exhibition and continue with a meeting with one of Israel’s leading entrepreneurs.
- Our next stop is at the **Sarona Market**, a newly renovated complex with buildings dating back over 140 years to the German templars. The story of the complex and its renovation is quite fascinating.
- We have time for lunch on own here, followed by a wine tasting at **The Tasting Room** inside.
- We step into a world of creativity at **The World of Michal Negrin**. Here, we view a film and take a guided tour through the famous jeweler’s studio. Then we are off to the fashionable shops of Mika and other designers for shopping or a café, or return to the hotel or beach.
- Dinner on own or head to the hip and happening Old Port of Tel Aviv.

Overnight in Tel Aviv



Day 5: Monday, March 19, 2018: ISRAELI INTELLIGENCE & DIVERSITY

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- Today, we travel to nearby **Herzliya** for a high-level briefing at the **Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Center**, dedicated to the memory of the fallen in the Israeli intelligence community.
- We travel north to **Haifa** for a tour of **Beit Hagefen Arab Jewish Center**, to gain an insider's look into the diverse community, as well as the various projects that are in place to bring Jews and Arabs together.
- We continue to **Akko**, the dramatic Crusader city, to see the tunnels and the famous **British prison** that housed Jewish terrorists and freedom fighters, the Irgun & Stern gang.
- We continue to our bucolic hillside resort at **Mitzpe Hayamim**, with spectacular views of the Golan, to refresh, followed by **dinner** together.

Overnight in Mitzpe Hayamim

Day 6: Tuesday, March 20, 2018: KIBBUTZ MALKIA & THE HULA VALLEY

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Our day begins with a drive along the Lebanese border, stopping at **Kibbutz Malkia**, a strategic overlook. Here, we meet with the IDF military unit on the border and kibbutz security personnel to learn how they protect frontier communities.
- We continue on our journey to the **Hula Valley Nature Reserve**, to see thousands of migrating and native birds, and take a **surrey ride** through the park.
- We return to **Mitzpe Hayamim** for a relaxing afternoon at leisure, with the option to enjoy the spa and pool.
- Relaxing **dinner** together at our hotel.



Overnight in Mitzpe Hayamim

Day 7: Wednesday, March 21, 2018: THE SOUTHERN EDGE

- Light breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- This morning, we travel to the southern frontier region. Our first stop is in **Sderot** in the Negev, for a guided drive with security personnel and get a briefing and a view into the **Gaza Strip** (*security conditions permitting*).
- Following our briefing, we enjoy **lunch** with **Mevashlot Sderot**, a group of women who prepare traditional ethnic Jewish culinary treats.
- We visit **Saroka Medical Center**, for a tour and a chance to perform a mitzvah of *bikur cholim* (visiting the sick), and learn about how this hospital handles war related trauma issues.
- We continue to the natural drama **Mitzpe Ramon** to check into **Beresheet Hotel & Resort**, sitting right on the edge of the *machtesh*, Israel's Grand Canyon.
- This evening, we enjoy **dinner** together at our resort.

Overnight in Mitzpe Ramon



Day 8: Thursday, March 22, 2018: DESERT ADVENTURES

- We rise for a beautiful special **sunrise service** along the edge of the **Ramon Crater**, where we see this natural wonder basking in the first light of day.
- Return to our resort for breakfast.
- We head out after breakfast for an easy **hike** in a national park, through the magnificent **Ein Avdat Canyon**.
- We continue to the **Shirat Midbar Spice Farm** for an experience at a unique organic farm with medicinal herbs and spices, Moroccan Argon trees, grapes and a colorful orchard, including **lunch**.
- Free time to rest, relax by the pool or visit the world class spa at Beresheet.
- This evening, we enjoy **dinner** at our resort.
- Following dinner, we experience **star gazing** with a naturalist, marveling at radiant sparks of light in the black night sky.
- We return to our resort later this evening.



Overnight in Mitzpe Ramon

Day 9: Friday, March 23, 2018: ROAD TO JERUSALEM / EXPLORING NEIGHBORHOODS

- Breakfast and check out of our resort.
- Our day begins with a visit to the **Soreq caves** to see the stalactite and stalagmite formations.
- Continue with a **jeep tour** along the **Burma Road**, as our guide narrates the struggle for Jerusalem in 1948 and the biblical stories brought to mind by the views of famous biblical sites along the way.
- We arrive in **Jerusalem**, and check in to the **Inbal Hotel** and have time to relax and refresh.
- As the sun begins to set, we participate in **Shabbat services** at a Reform Progressive congregation. Later this evening, we enjoy **dinner** hosted by some of the member families.

Overnight in Jerusalem

Day 10: Saturday, March 24, 2018: SHABBAT IN JERUSALEM



- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Optional **Shabbat services** at **Hebrew Union College (HUC)**, the center of Progressive Judaism in Jerusalem, followed by a short tour of the campus.
 - We enjoy a **walking tour and political discussion** in the **Old City** with **Professor Paul Liptz** of HUC, entitled *“The Interaction of War and Politics: 1948 to Present”*. We stop along the way for lunch (on own) in the Christian quarter.
 - Mid-afternoon free time to enjoy the hotel’s amenities.



- As Shabbat comes to an end, we join together for a short **Havdallah** service, led by Rabbi Gelfand, overlooking the walls of the Old City at the Montefiore Windmill.
- Spend the evening at leisure and enjoy dinner on own at the nearby newly resorted **train station (Tachana)**.

Overnight in Jerusalem

Day 11: Sunday, March 25, 2018: YEARNING FOR PEACE

- Breakfast and discussion with **Alec Isaacs**, who shares his story and his project, **Siach Shalom**, a possible game-changer in the endless struggle for peace.
- Next, we visit **Yad B'yad**, a cutting-edge, unique Jewish-Arab school, meeting faculty and students and tour their campus.
- Drive to **Gush Etzion** to meet **Ali Abu Awwad** and **Shaul Yudelman**, the founders of a grassroots project and dialogue called **Roots/Shorashim** that is working to bring together Palestinian and Jewish settlers.
- **Lunch** at the **Harutzim Café** in **Talpiot**, run by **Shekel**, providing community services for 8,000 people with special needs from every sector of Israeli society, including Jews, Arabs and Christians, whether religious or secular.
- Return to the Old City for *The Three Faiths Tour of Jerusalem* with **Hannah Bendkowsky**, seeing the incredible patchwork of religious life in one of the most interesting and complex cities in the world. Our tour includes visits to **Church of the Holy Sepulchre**, the **Stations of the Cross**, the **Dome of the Rock**, and the **Kotel (Western Wall)**. At **St. Georges Cathedral**, we meet **Rector Hosam Elisas Noam** and **Sheik Issam Najar**.
- Dinner on own.
- **OPTIONAL: Evening cultural performance** (TBD - based on schedule as we get closer to departure with additional cost).

Overnight in Jerusalem

Day 12: Monday, March 26, 2018: REACHING OUT - FROM PAST TO PRESENT

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Our day begins with *tikkun olam* with an unforgettable 90-minute hands-on experience at **Pantry Packers**, packing food staples included in monthly food baskets and delivered to Israel's neediest families.
- Next, we visit **Mt. Herzl**, Israel's national military cemetery, view the new, strikingly moving **Remembrance Hall**, which commemorates the lives of more than 23,000 fallen soldiers killed defending the State of Israel.
- We'll enjoy an illuminating briefing on-site by **Retired Colonel Miri Eisin**, former official spokesperson in charge of explaining Israel's stance on the ongoing Israel-Arab conflict.
- Optional guided afternoon **hike** through the **Judean Hills**, outside Jerusalem, amidst beautiful natural settings, or return to our hotel for an afternoon at leisure, shopping or relaxing at the pool.

Overnight in Jerusalem



Day 13: Tuesday, March 27, 2018: A FAREWELL TASTE OF JERUSALEM

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Guided tour of **Machane Yehuda**, Jerusalem’s outdoor marketplace, filled with foods of every variety. Together we’ll learn about Middle Eastern spices and taste various foods as we participate in the “**shuk bites**” tasting experience.
- Visit an unusual **Hasidic synagogue** in nearby **Mea Shearim**.
- We continue with a **walking tour** of the **Nachlaot** neighborhood, considered by many to be Jerusalem’s most pluralistic neighborhood, mixing the various streams of Orthodox Judaism with secular residents.
- Free time for last minute shopping or exploration on own.
- This evening, we check out of our hotel and enjoy a festive **farewell dinner**, as we recall all that we have experienced together on this journey.
- We transfer to the Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv for our overnight flight back to New York.



(EXTENSION: If you wish to extend your trip into the weekend and the beginning of Passover, Ayelet Tours will gladly be of help).

Day 14: Wednesday, March 28, 2018: WELCOME HOME!

- We arrive back in New York this morning. Welcome home!

THE MEMORIES LAST FOREVER!

**itinerary subject to change*

