

## Highlights Tour Of **ISRAEL**

**9 Nights \* 11 Days \* 6 Touring Days**

**Thursday Departure/Friday Arrival**

**2 nights Tel Aviv \* 2 nights Galilee**

**5 nights Jerusalem**

(As of 3/1/19)



### **DAY 1: THURSDAY – DEPARTURE**

- Depart the United States on your overnight flight to Israel. (Contact Ayelet Tours for assistance booking flights.)

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### **DAY 2: FRIDAY - WELCOME TO ISRAEL!**

- Shalom and welcome to Israel! Upon arrival at Ben Gurion Airport you will be greeted and assisted by an Ayelet Tours representative.
- We transfer to our hotel (on own) to check in and enjoy the remainder of the afternoon and evening at leisure.

### **Overnight in Tel Aviv**

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### **DAY 3: SATURDAY - SHABBAT SHALOM!**

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Enjoy a day at leisure to explore Tel Aviv on own. Relax at the beach, take in a museum or art gallery or just stroll around the city.
- Dinner on own tonight.

### **Overnight in Tel Aviv**

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## DAY 4: SUNDAY - THE MEDITERRANEAN COAST

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- Today, we drive along the Mediterranean coast to **Caesarea**, the former Roman capital of the area. Here, we view the ancient theater, the aqueduct, and ancient port as well as the impressive excavations of the Crusaders' city.
- We continue to **Megiddo**, site of biblical Armageddon, whose 20 layers of civilization were featured in James Michener's *The Source*.
- Our next stop is the **Druze village** of **Daliyat al Carmel**, where we have the opportunity to learn about their unique culture. We enjoy a **late lunch** at a local restaurant.
- We drive to the top of **Mt. Carmel** in **Haifa**, where we take in the panoramic views overlooking the amazing terraced **Bahai Gardens**.
- We continue to the **Galilee** to check into our kibbutz and refresh before **dinner** together this evening.

### Overnight in the Galilee

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## DAY 5: MONDAY - SAFED AND THE GOLAN

- Breakfast at our kibbutz.
- Today, we tour the mystical city of **Safed**, center of Kabbalistic practice, exploring the narrow alleyways lined with ancient synagogues and artists' galleries.
- We enjoy a drive through the **Golan Heights**, passing former Syrian bunkers on the way to the top of **Har Bental** for panoramic views stretching far into neighboring Syria. Our guide updates us on the geopolitical situation in the area.
- We continue to **Kuneitra**, the former Syrian administrative capital of the region and **Katzrin**, the Israeli administrative capital of the region.
- Next, we stop at the award-winning **Golan winery** for a **tour and wine tasting**.
- Our final stop is at **Kesem Hagolan** to watch a spectacular multimedia presentation of the area and its history in the 180-degree IMAX movie theater.
- We return to our kibbutz for **dinner** this evening.



### Overnight in the Galilee

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## DAY 6: TUESDAY - THE SEA OF GALILEE AND NAZARETH

- Breakfast and check out of our kibbutz.
- We begin our day with a visit to the **Church of the Annunciation in Nazareth**, \*\* which some believe marks the site of Mary's childhood home and the Annunciation by the angel Gabriel.
- We continue to **Tiberias**, one of four holy cities in Judaism, where we visit the grave of the medieval sage **Maimonides**.
- Our next stop is at **Capernaum**, where Jesus began his ministry, and site of numerous miracles. We see the ruins of several synagogues and the octagonal **Church of St. Peter**.
- At **Mount of Beatitudes**, we see the place where Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount.
- We drive by the Roman ruins of **Beit Shean**, destroyed over 1,300 years ago by earthquake, recently excavated and reconstructed on a massive and impressive scale. Then we visit **Beit Alpha** to view the intricate mosaics in the synagogue.
- We ascend to **Jerusalem** and check into our hotel.
- Spend the evening at leisure discovering Jerusalem and enjoying dinner on own.

### Overnight in Jerusalem

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## DAY 7: WEDNESDAY – ANCIENT JERUSALEM

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We begin our day with an ascent up the **Mount of Olives** for a magnificent panoramic view of the **City of Gold**.
- Next, we drive to the top of **Mt. Zion**, where we visit the **tomb of King David** and then proceed to the **Upper Room**, believed to be the site of the **Last Supper**.
- We enter the walled **Old City** and walk through the newly restored **Jewish quarter**, including the **Roman Cardo** marketplace, the **Herodian** quarter excavations and the **Western Wall**, where we have time for personal reflection.
- We walk the **Stations of the Cross** along the **Via Dolorosa**, ending at the **Church of the Holy Sepulchre** in the **Christian quarter**.
- We continue to **Bethlehem**\*\* (security permitting) to view the **tomb of Rachel**, wife of biblical patriarch Jacob.
- We complete our day with a visit to the **Church of the Nativity** and **Manger Square**.
- We return to Jerusalem for an evening at leisure and dinner on own.



### Overnight in Jerusalem

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## DAY 8: THURSDAY - MODERN JERUSALEM

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Today, we browse the extensive galleries of the **Israel Museum**, which recently completed a \$100 million renovation and is world class in every way. The galleries range from pop and modern art, back through the Renaissance and Classical periods, with a strong emphasis on Jewish and Israeli archeological history with evidence going back thousands of years. We walk through the iconic **Shrine of the Book**, which houses the Dead Sea Scrolls, and see the impressive miniature replica of Jerusalem as it was during the Second Temple period.
- We continue to the **Knesset**, Israel's parliament, where we take a tour and have time for a unique photo opportunity by the amazing outdoor bronze menorah sculpture.
- At **Mt. Herzl**, Jerusalem's military cemetery, we learn from our guide some of the heroic stories of those buried here, including Theodore Herzl, Golda Meir, Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres.
- We continue to **Yad Vashem**, Israel's Holocaust memorial, where we view the many moving exhibitions, including the Hall of Names and the Avenue of the Righteous Among the Nations.
- We drive through **Mea Shearim**, an Ultra-Orthodox neighborhood in Jerusalem to learn about the unique lifestyle of the residents.
- Tonight, we enjoy a **Middle Eastern dinner** together, followed by the spectacular **Sound and Light Show** at the **Tower of David** (*weather permitting*).

### Overnight in Jerusalem

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## DAY 9: FRIDAY - MASADA AND THE DEAD SEA

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Early this morning, we depart for the **Dead Sea basin**.
- Along the way, we stop at the **Qumran caves**, the site where the Dead Sea scrolls were found by a local shepherd.
- We ascend **Masada** by cable car to view the remains of King Herod's fortress, including the synagogue, walls and bathhouses, as we learn about the Jewish Zealots' last stand against the Roman forces.
- We descend the mountain and head to the beach to experience the mineral-rich mud and enjoy an unsinkable swim in the healing, salty waters of the **Dead Sea**.
- Later this afternoon, we return to Jerusalem for a quiet Shabbat on own.



### Overnight in Jerusalem

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## **DAY 10: SATURDAY - SHABBAT SHALOM!**

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Enjoy a day at leisure to explore Jerusalem on own, or just relax and enjoy the calm of the Jewish Sabbath.
- Evening at leisure and dinner on own.

### **Overnight in Jerusalem**

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## **DAY 11: SUNDAY – DEPARTURE**

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- We depart (on own) for Ben Gurion Airport for our flights back to the United States, landing later today.

### **THE MEMORIES LAST FOREVER!**

*\*Itinerary subject to change*

**\*\*Visit subject to availability**

The above program can be extended and customized for groups or private families.

