

14 Night Highlights Tour of **ISRAEL**

14 Nights * 16 Days * 10 Touring Days
Tuesday Departure/Wednesday Arrival
4 nights Tel Aviv * 2 nights Galilee
5 nights Jerusalem
*** 2 nights Eilat * 1 night Tel Aviv**
OPTION: Petra day tour



Day 1: Tuesday - DEPARTURE

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

Day 2: Wednesday - 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 to check in and enjoy the remainder of the afternoon and evening at leisure on own.

Overnight in Tel Aviv

Day 3: Thursday - TEL AVIV UP CLOSE

- Breakfast at our hotel
- This morning, we drive through Tel Aviv and learn more about this vibrant city.
- Next, we visit **Latrun** Israel's outdoor armed corps museum, where we explore and touch the tanks and artillery used by the Israeli Defense Force and enemy armies throughout the country's history.
- We travel to **Beit Guvrin National Park** to explore some of the caves and archaeological remains.
- Our final stop today is at the **Ayalon Institute**, an underground ammunition factory that played a pivotal role in Israel's fight for independence at the end of the British Mandate.
- Evening at leisure and dinner on own.

Overnight in Tel Aviv



Day 4: Friday - EXPLORING TEL AVIV

- Breakfast at our hotel
- This morning, we visit the **Diaspora Museum**, where we learn about the history of Jewish emigration since the destruction of the Second Temple and see models of some of the world's most well known and majestic synagogues.
- We drive around the main streets of Tel Aviv, Israel's vibrant center of business and entertainment and stop for a moment of reflections at **Rabin's Square**, place of the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.
- We visit **Old Jaffa**, one of oldest ports in the world, where we walk among the many artists, vendors and cafes as we hear the history of the ancient port and take in the views of the sea.
- We continue to **Neve Tzedek**, the first neighborhood of Tel Aviv, built in 1909, now experiencing a renaissance.
- This afternoon, we enjoy the entertainers, artists, shop owners, colorful vendors and craftspeople that bring the streets to life on **Nachalat Binyamin** and in the adjacent **Carmel Market**.
- We browse along **Sheinkin Street**, the lively and colorful street especially known for its unique shops and cafes.
- Enjoy a quiet Shabbat on own.



Overnight in Tel Aviv

Day 5: 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



Day 6: 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 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

Day 7: 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



Day 8: 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.
- 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

Day 9: 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**.
- We continue to **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 and the **Herodian** quarter excavations.
- 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



Day 10: 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.
- After dinner, we enjoy a spectacular **Sound and Light Show** at the **Tower of David** (*weather permitting*).

Overnight in Jerusalem

Day 11: 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 **Qumran**, site where 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 for 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



Day 12: 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

Day 13: Sunday: THE SOUTH

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
We travel south through the Negev Desert to visit **Timna** with its impressive and beautiful desert stone landscapes, once home to King Solomon's copper mines, and marvel at the huge multi-colored rock formations.
- We continue to **Eilat** and visit the fascinating **Underwater Observatory**, one of the largest seaquariums in the world, built into a coral reef in the Gulf of Eilat.
- We check into our hotel and enjoy a relaxing evening and dinner on own.

Overnight in Eilat

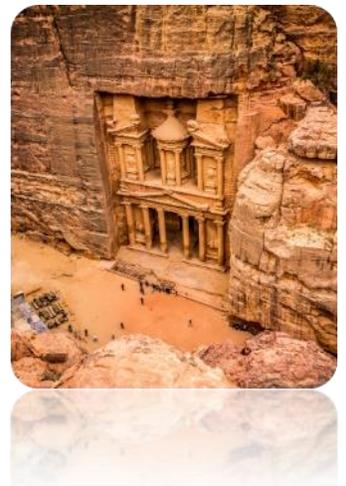
Day 14: Monday: EILAT/PETRA

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Enjoy a day of leisure relaxing or enjoying some of the many water sports on the shores of the Red Sea **OR** opt for an exciting day tour to **Petra in Jordan***.

*OPTIONAL DAY TOUR TO PETRA

(additional cost applies)

- A mini-bus will provide early morning pick-up at hotels and transfer to the Jordanian border for crossing formalities.
- After assistance with visa processing, we continue across the border into **Jordan**, and board our bus to begin our touring experience.
- We drive along desert highways to our ultimate destination, the astonishing red rose city of **Petra**, once renowned for its massive architecture, pools, dams and water channels. Petra is the legacy of the Nabateans, an early Arab tribe, who settled in southern Jordan more than two thousand years ago.



- The visit begins with the possibility of a short horseback-ride for about 700 meters (a little less than ½ mile) to the entrance of the **Siq**, which is about 1.2 km (¾ mile) long (walking distance). There is a possibility to rent a cart (extra cost) to get inside **Petra** and back to the gate outside.
- Petra is famous for its huge monuments such as the **Treasury, Royal Tombs, The Court, Roman Theatre, Roman Street, Qassier El- Bint** (Palace of Pharaoh's daughter) and many other smaller monuments which fascinate visitors. The city itself is almost 45 square km and considered to be the Eighth Wonder of the World.
- We enjoy a **late** lunch together.
- We return to the **Jordan/Israel border** around 6:00 PM to conclude crossing formalities.
- We return to our hotel in Eilat for a free evening and dinner on own.

Overnight in Eilat

Day 15: Tuesday: THE MAGNIFICANT RAMON CRATER

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- This morning, we travel north to the edge of the breathtaking **Ramon Crater in Mitzpe Ramon**.
- We continue to **Sde Boker** to view David Ben Gurion's gravesite and original hut, where we recall his dream of turning the desert green and see the ways it is becoming a reality.
- Afterwards, we enjoy an authentic biblical experience at a **Bedouin tent**, including a **camel ride, desert hospitality** and a **light lunch**.
- This afternoon, we head north to the Israeli Air Force Museum at **Hatzerim** to see aircraft from throughout Israel's history.
- We continue to **Tel Aviv**. Upon arrival, we check into our hotel and refresh, followed by an evening at leisure and dinner on own.



Overnight in Tel Aviv



Day 16: Wednesday: DEPARTURE

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- We depart for Ben Gurion Airport for our flights back to the United States, landing later today. L'hitraot!

THE MEMORIES LAST FOREVER!

**Itinerary subject to change*

****Visit subject to availability**

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

See Day Tour to Petra details below.

A PUBLIC GROUP DAY TOUR TO PETRA may be added for \$270.00 per person, not including visa fee or border taxes. Listed tour cost and Jordanian visa fee/processing charge of \$69.00 are payable in advance and are **non-refundable**.

NOTE: Travelers to Petra must provide accurate passport information to allow Ayelet Tours to secure your Jordanian visa a minimum of 10 days in advance of travel. In addition, travelers must carry a valid passport and \$65.00 per person in US currency for border taxes on the day of the Petra tour. Credit cards and travelers' checks are not accepted at border crossing. Rates subject to change without notice.

Please note: If you depart from Israel during your visit (for example to go to Jordan or Egypt even for one day) VAT refund must be requested from customs at your departure land border at the time you depart. VAT at Ben Gurion airport will only process the refund for any goods purchased since last date of entry into Israel.

