

Beth Emeth's Multi-Generational Exploration of **ISRAEL**

Led by Rabbi Scott Shpeen, Rabbi Greg Weitzman
& Rabbi Shara Siegfeld
August 19-30, 2023

(As of 1/18/23)

*Jewish people have continuously lived in Jerusalem for more than **3,000 years**. Traveling in Israel is an opportunity to encounter the wonders of this ancient land. We'll grow through our shared experiences, from the fun and adventurous, to the historical and spiritual, as we explore Israel together!*



Day 1: Saturday, August 19, 2023: DEPARTURE

- We depart the United States on our overnight flight to Israel.
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Day 2: Sunday, August 20, 2023: WELCOME TO ISRAEL!

- Shalom and Bruchim Habaim—welcome to Israel! We arrive in at Ben Gurion International Airport, where we are met by an Ayelet Tours representative, who will assist with all formalities. Our time in this incredible land has officially begun and our excitement mounts as we set off on the adventure ahead!
- We begin at **Neot Kedumim**, where we **plant trees**, connecting us physically and spiritually to the land of Israel.
- Next, we visit **Caesarea Maritima**, once the Roman capital of the region, to see the excavations of the crusaders' city, the aqueduct and the ancient theater that has been restored as a concert venue.
- We continue driving north along the Mediterranean coast and into the **Galilee**, where we check into our kibbutz and have a chance to refresh before enjoying our **welcome dinner** together this evening.

Overnight in the Galilee

Day 3: Monday, August 21, 2023: NORTHERN ADVENTURE

- Breakfast at our kibbutz.
- We begin our day at **Nimrod's Castle**, a Crusader-era fortress atop Mt. Hermon from the 13th century with a stunning view of the area.
- We hike down from Nimrod's Castle to the **Banias spring**, stream and waterfall, stopping for a dip to cool off and enjoy the beautiful nature of this site, once associated with the ancient Greek god Pan.
- **Boxed lunch** along the way.
- Following lunch, we meet **Eitan**, a member of **Kibbutz Malkia**, and partake in a dialogue regarding some of the issues relating to the security of communities in Northern Israel, Our visit also includes meeting with IDF soldiers serving on the Lebanese border.
- We return to our kibbutz for a quiet evening and **dinner** together.

Overnight in the Galilee



Day 4: Tuesday, August 22, 2023: THE GORGEOUS GOLAN HEIGHTS

- Breakfast at our kibbutz.
- This morning, we enjoy a refreshing **water hike** in the **Majrase Nature Reserve**, which is beautiful all-year round.
- Next, we visit **Aniam**, a colorful artists' village in the center of the Golan Heights and meet with **Osnat Rottman** at her art and tile studio.
- We drive to the **Druze village of Bukhata**, where we experience an authentic **lunch** as we learn about this Arab minority group established in the 11th century renowned for their hospitality.
- We continue to the **Golan Winery** for a tour and select **wine tasting**.
- Later this afternoon, we take in an amazing view and visit **Mitzpe Gadot**, a memorial dedicated to IDF soldiers who lost their lives capturing this crucial spot from Syrian forces in 1967.
- The adventure continues with a **kayaking excursion** down the Jordan River.
- We return to our kibbutz for a relaxing evening and **dinner** together.

Overnight in the Galilee

Day 5: Wednesday, August 23, 2023: THE ROAD TO JERUSALEM

- Breakfast and check out of our kibbutz.
- We begin our day with a visit to the mystical city of **Safed**, birthplace of Kabbalah and home to legends, myths and miracles. We will wander the cobblestone alleys, visit the ancient **Caro** and **Ha'ari synagogues**, hear stories of the great mystics and stroll through the enchanting artists' quarter. The artists among us will enjoy a **candle making or Kabbalah workshop**.
- Next, we enjoy a fascinating tour of **Beit Shean**, one of Israel's largest archeological sites and oldest cities, including a Roman amphitheater that is still in use today.
- We take a drive through the picturesque **Jordan Valley**.
- We complete our day at **Genesis Land**, located in the heart of the Judean Desert, where we will experience life as they did in Biblical times with **camel rides** and fresh **pita making**.
- We ascend to **Jerusalem** and stop for a brief welcome and Shehecheyanu blessing atop **Mt. Scopus** overlooking the **City of Gold** for the first time together!
- We check into our hotel and have a chance to freshen up.
- Later this evening, we experience the hip Jerusalem vibe on a special nighttime tour of **Machane Yehuda**, Jerusalem's bustling marketplace, and see how it transforms into a happening hub of night life. Dinner on our own here at one of the trendy restaurants or cafes.



Overnight in Jerusalem



Day 6: Thursday, August 24, 2023: PEACE AND PROSPERITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Today, we travel south to the **Eshkol Region** and **meet with local leadership** in the southern town of **Sderot**, a symbol of Israeli resilience, located near the border with Gaza.
- Our next stop is at the **Salad Trail**, where we participate in a unique hands-on agricultural tour, witnessing how Israeli innovation is literally making the desert bloom with crops grown out of some of the most inhospitable sands imaginable. We will pick and taste fruits and vegetables from the self-picking farm and encounter flying strawberries, tiny orange orchards, racing pigeons and herbal gardens. Our visit includes a **picnic lunch**.
- This afternoon, we visit **Moshav Netiv Ha'Asara** and learn about the **Path to Peace**, a community-created mosaic along the border wall separating Israel from the Gaza Strip. We have an opportunity to **add a piece to the mosaic** and put our own imprint on this project of hope.
- Next, we visit the workshop of artist **Yaron Bob**. Struck by the terror of shell attacks, Yaron decided to transform something horrible into something beautiful, and so began his artwork known as **"Rockets to Roses"**.
- Time permitting, we visit **Ashkelon National Park**, a beautiful recreation park in the heart of nature, where we will see the **Canaanite Gate** considered to be the oldest vaulted gate in the world.
- We return to Jerusalem for an evening at leisure and dinner on our own.

Overnight in Jerusalem

Day 7: Friday, August 25, 2023: JERUSALEM IN DEPTH

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We begin our day in the **Old City** and head underground for a tour of the **Western Wall tunnels**, giving us the opportunity to discover the many layers of Jerusalem's history, passing through grand building projects from ancient Rome through the modern day.
- No visit to Israel would be complete without a stop at the **Western Wall (Kotel)** with time for personal reflection.
- We continue with a walking tour through Jerusalem's **Old City** for a chance to discover the archaeological treasures and highlights. We begin in the **Jewish Quarter** to experience the center of Jewish life with visit to **Hurva Square** and the famed **Cardo market**, plus the chance to view King Hezekiah's **Broad wall**, a massive wall built to protect Jerusalem from invasion 2,700 years ago. Our path takes us into the **Christian quarter** and follow the **Via Dolorosa** to the **Church of the Holy Sepulchre**, where Jesus is believed to have been crucified, then continue into the **Muslim quarter** to view the Dome of the Rock, one of Islam's most sacred and beautiful sites.
- As the sun begins to set, we join together for **Kabbalat Shabbat** at the **Tachana HaRishona**, followed by **Shabbat dinner** at our hotel.



Overnight in Jerusalem



Day 8: Saturday, August 26, 2023: SHABBAT SHALOM

- Breakfast at our hotel.

OPTION 1 - SHABBAT IN JERUSALEM:

- This morning, choose to participate in “**shul-hopping**”, including visits to some of the city’s most interesting synagogues to take part in a variety of unique Shabbat services.
- Enjoy this afternoon at leisure.
- **Optional:** This afternoon, visit the famed **Israel Museum** (on own), the country’s premiere cultural institution, featuring ancient archaeology, modern Israeli art, and everything in between. This is also the site of the **Shrine of the Book**, housing the famous **Dead Sea Scrolls**, as well as a large-scale replica of King Herod’s Jerusalem.

OPTION 2 - THE DEAD SEA BASIN:

- We depart early this morning and travel south to the **Dead Sea basin**. Upon arrival, we ascend the imposing mountain of **Masada** by cable car (or hike up the famous snake path) to view the remains of King Herod’s fortress, including the synagogue, walls and bathhouse, as we learn about the Jewish Zealots’ fateful last stand against the Roman forces.
- We descend the mountain and head to the beach for **lunch** and an unsinkable swim in the luxuriating, salty and mineral-rich waters of the **Dead Sea**, where we can cover ourselves in silky, healing mud and float at the lowest place on Earth.
- Time permitting, we enjoy a short hike to the hidden waterfalls in the desert oasis of **Ein Gedi**.

ALL:

- Later this evening, we all gather to enjoy a special **Havdallah** at our hotel, followed by a **guest speaker from Hebrew Union College (HUC)**, the epicenter of Progressive Judaism in Jerusalem.
- We enjoy **dinner** together at a delicious Jerusalem restaurant.



Overnight in Jerusalem



Day 9: Sunday, August 27, 2023: MODERN JERUSALEM

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- This morning, we meet with the leadership of **Hand in Hand (Yad B'Yad)**, an organization building inclusion and equality between Arab and Jewish citizens of Israel through a growing network of bilingual, integrated schools and communities.
- We continue to **Yad Vashem**, Israel's memorial to the Holocaust, where we view the many moving exhibitions, including the **Hall of Names**, the **Children's Memorial** and the **Avenue of the Righteous Among the Nations**. Those who are of proper age will participate in a special **twinning program** and be matched with a child who did not have the opportunity to mark their bar or bat mitzvah. (Younger children will visit the Biblical Zoo).
- Next, we travel to **Beit Guvrin** for a hands-on archaeological dig, allowing us the opportunity to unearth remnants from Israel's ancient past. Those who wish can participate in **cave crawling** through the underground tunnel.
- We drive to **Tel Aviv** and check into our hotel, then spend the evening at leisure exploring and enjoying dinner on own.

Overnight in Tel Aviv

Day 10: Monday, August 28, 2023: THE FIRST HEBREW CITY

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We begin our day at the **Ayalon Institute** to discover the underground ammunition factory that played a pivotal role in Israel's fight for independence.
- Next, we visit the **Israel Guide Dog Center**, where we will learn firsthand why dogs really are man's best friend.
- Founded in 2014 by venture capitalist Yadin Kaufmann, **Palestinian Internship Program (PIP)** provides young Palestinian professionals with work experience placements at leading Israel-based companies. We meet with **Anna Gol-Dekel**, Executive Director of PIP, as well as an internship participant for their insight into this inspiring initiative.
- Later, we walk along the **Independence Trail**, a journey from a Hebrew city to a Hebrew state, which includes: The **First Kiosk**, **Nachum Gutman Mosaic Fountain**, **Herzliya Hebrew Gymnasium** and **Independence Hall**. We also discover "**The White City**", a UNESCO World Heritage site home to thousands of international-style buildings, among them the famous **Bauhaus**.
- Evening at leisure to relax by the pool or hit the waves on one of Tel Aviv's amazing beaches and have dinner on own.

Overnight in Tel Aviv



Day 11: Tuesday, August 29, 2023: A TASTE OF TEL AVIV

- Breakfast at our hotel. Check out and store our luggage for the day.
 - We begin our day at the newly designed **ANU - Museum of the Jewish People**, which conveys to the world the narrative of the Jewish people and the essence of the Jewish culture and faith.
 - We continue to stroll down the **Nachalat Binyamin** pedestrian mall with its bi-weekly craft fair and eateries.
 - Alongside is the bustling **Carmel Market**, filled with colorful produce and goodies from halva and baklava to gifts and mementos. We take in the sights, smells and sounds as we make our way through the market on a **tasting tour**.
 - Enjoy some relaxing time at the beach.
 - This evening, we come together one last time for a festive **farewell dinner** and a chance to reminisce about all we have experienced on this journey.
 - After dinner, we transfer to Ben Gurion Airport for our overnight flight back to the United States.
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Day 12: Wednesday, August 30, 2023: WELCOME HOME!

- We arrive back in the United States this morning.

THE MEMORIES LAST FOREVER!!

**itinerary subject to change*

