



Congregation Shaarai Shomayim & Congregation Shireinu Panim el Panim (Face to Face) in

ISRAEL

Led by Rabbi Jack Paskoff,
Rabbi Jeffrey Eisenstat
& Rabbi Sarah Messinger
February 6-16, 2020

(As of 7/23/19)



See Israel as you've never seen it before. Together we will explore hidden gems and encounter new perspectives. We'll spend Shabbat with the local Progressive communities in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. We'll face social justice issues head on, including bridging the Palestinian/Settler divide, and the tensions between Jews and Arabs, and we'll celebrate Tu B'Shvat in the land of Israel. From wine tasting to a picnic lunch overlooking the Judean Desert. Don't miss this incredible journey!

Day 1: Thursday, February 6, 2020: DEPARTURE

- We depart the United States on our overnight flight to Israel.

Day 2: Friday, February 7, 2020: WELCOME TO ISRAEL!

- We arrive in Israel and are met by an Ayelet Tours representative.
- We transfer to our hotel in **Tel Aviv** to check in and have time to relax and refresh.
- As the sun sets, we join together at **Beit Tefila Yisraeli** for **Kabbalat Shabbat**, including a short discussion with founder **Rabbi Estaban Gottfried**.
- This evening, we enjoy a **welcome Shabbat dinner** at our hotel.

Overnight in Tel Aviv



Day 3: Saturday, February 8, 2020: SHABBAT SHALOM!

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We begin our day at the recently updated **Beit Hatfutsot (Diaspora Museum)**, where we learn about the history of Jewish emigration since the destruction of the Second Temple and view the Jewish humor exhibit (subject to exhibit rotation schedule).
- This afternoon, we enjoy lunch on own at the dazzling **Sarona Market**, built around former German Templar ruins, where we'll enjoy a world class dining experience with something for everyone.
- Next, we visit the **Ayalon Institute**, where we discover the underground ammunition factory that played a pivotal role in Israel's fight for independence.
- Enjoy the remainder of the afternoon and evening at leisure with dinner on own tonight.
- **Optional:** Attend a **Mayumana** performance (additional cost).

Overnight in Tel Aviv

Day 4: Sunday, February 9, 2020: THE MEDITERRANEAN COAST

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- This morning, we travel north along the Mediterranean coast to **Atlit**, a former detention compound for Jewish immigrants who arrived in Israel during the British Mandate period, followed by a dialogue with **Murray Greenfield**, who was detained here.
- Our next stop is in the quaint European style village of **Zichron Yaakov**, where we stroll through the street and browse amongst the shops and cafes with time for lunch on own before continuing to the **Tishbi Winery** for a **tour and tasting**.
- We continue to **Akko**, where we tour the Crusader-era fortress and British prison as we learn about this historically important port and uncover its many secrets.
- We return to Tel Aviv for an evening at leisure and dinner on own.

Overnight in Tel Aviv

Day 5: Monday, February 10, 2020: THE NEGEV DESERT (Tu B'Shvat)

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- Today is **Tu B'Shvat**, the new year for the trees! We'll celebrate by eating fruits of the bible - grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates!
- This morning, we depart Tel Aviv and travel south to the **Negev Desert**.
- We meet with Rotem and hear his story at **Café Gotha** in **Sderot**, a social café that employs young people with disabilities and at-risk youth.
- Next, we visit **Saroka Medical Center** with a chance to perform the mitzvah of bikur cholim. We'll hear from hospital personnel and learn how they handle war related trauma issues.
- We drive to **Segev Shalom** and visit with **Amal Abualkom** to hear her inspiring story of how she is leading the movement for women's empowerment in the Negev region of Be'er Sheva.
- We continue south to **Mitzpe Ramon** to check into our hotel and refresh.
- Tonight, we enjoy **dinner** together at our hotel.

Overnight in Mitzpe Ramon



Day 6: Tuesday, February 11, 2020: DESERT ADVENTURES

- Breakfast at our hotel with a special presentation by guest **Rabbi Michael Cohen** from the **Arava Institute**.
- We enjoy a hike in **Ein Avdat**, a spectacular natural canyon where springs descend in a series of breathtaking waterfalls.
- Our next stop is at **Sde Boker** to view David Ben Gurion's gravesite and original hut.
- Next, we go on an exciting **jeep tour** into the **Ramon Crater**.
- We return to our hotel for **dinner** together.



Overnight in Mitzpe Ramon

Day 7: Wednesday, February 12, 2020: THE ROAD TO JERUSALEM, THE ROAD TO PEACE

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- Today, we travel to the **Gush Etzion** region for a dialogue with **Ali Abu Awwad** and **Rabbi Shaul Yudelman**, the founders of **Shorashim/Roots**, a grassroots program that fosters understanding, non-violence and partnership between Israelis and Palestinians.
- Next, we stop at **Kever Rachel**, revered as the burial place of the matriarch Rachel, which has been considered a holy place for over 2,000 years.
- We ascend to **Jerusalem**, stopping at the **Haas Promenade** to say the “Shehecheyanu” as we look out over the **City of Gold**.
- We check into our hotel, where we meet with **Alec Isaacs**, who shares his story and his project **Siach Shalom**, a possible game-changer in the seemingly endless struggle for peace.
- Evening at leisure to discover Jerusalem and enjoy dinner on own.

Overnight in Jerusalem

Day 8: Thursday, February 13, 2020: YEARNING FOR PEACE

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We begin our day with a visit to **Yad B'Yad**, a cutting-edge unique Jewish-Arab school, to meet faculty and students.
- We enter the **Old City** for “*The Three Faiths Tour of Jerusalem*” with **Hanna Bendkowsky**. We spend time seeing the incredible patchwork of religious life in one of the most interesting and complex cities in the world. Along the way, we visit the **Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Stations of the Cross and the Western Wall**.
- Lunch on own in the Old City.
- Spend the remainder of the day exploring at leisure.
- Dinner on own tonight. We suggest a visit to Ben Yehuda Street.

Overnight in Jerusalem



Day 9: Friday, February 14, 2020: ART & ANCIENT DISCOVERIES

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We begin our day exploring the power of Jewish ideas, texts and values during a hands-on **art workshop** with **Rabbi Matt Berkowitz** of **Kol HaOt**.
- Next, we visit **Yad Vashem**, Israel's memorial to the Holocaust. First timers will go on a tour of the many moving exhibitions, including the Hall of Names and the Avenue of the Righteous Among the Nations. Returnees will tour the grounds with Rabbi Paskoff, visiting the Valley of the Lost Communities and other important parts of the complex.
- We return to our hotel to relax and refresh.
- As day turns to night, we join together for **Shabbat services** at **Kehilat Mevasseret Zion**, followed by **home hospitality Shabbat dinner** with members of the community.

Overnight in Jerusalem

Day 10: Saturday, February 15, 2020: MASADA & THE DEAD SEA

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We depart early this morning and travel south to the **Dead Sea basin**.
- 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 **lunch** and an unsinkable swim in the healing, salty waters of the **Dead Sea**.
- We return to Jerusalem later this afternoon.
- This evening, we check out of our hotel and enjoy a festive **farewell dinner**, recalling all that we have experienced on this amazing adventure together.
- We transfer to the airport for our overnight flight back to the United States.



Day 11: Sunday, February 16, 2020: WELCOME HOME!

- We arrive back in the United States this morning.

THE MEMORIES LAST FOREVER!!

**Itinerary subject to change*

