

Ayelet B'nai Mitzvah Family Adventure in **ISRAEL**

December 21, 2023 – January 1, 2024

Eilat Extension: January 1 – 5, 2024

(As of 5/19/2022)

Ayelet's B'nai Mitzvah Family Israel Adventure is an interactive, hands-on Israel tour for participants of every age. Each day is designed to engage and enlighten through a variety of sites, activities, and adventures. Our handpicked guides will bring heritage & history to life as we explore and celebrate in this amazing land!



Day 1: Thursday, December 21, 2023: DEPARTURE

- Departure from the U.S.
-

Day 2: Friday, December 22, 2023: WELCOME TO ISRAEL!

- Arrive at Israel's Ben Gurion Airport. Private transfer can be arranged.
- Check into our Jerusalem hotel and refresh after our journey.
- Later this afternoon, we meet our tour guide and other group members in the hotel lobby – we have the chance to get to know each other over **Shabbat dinner** this evening.
- Together we go to the **Haas Promenade** overlooking the City of Gold for a special “Shehecheyanu” ceremony, enjoying a sweet taste of challah and wine (*or grape juice*) to mark our arrival in Jerusalem of Gold!
- We continue to the **Western Wall** to greet **Shabbat** along with the people of Jerusalem. There is nothing quite like the energy of the Western Wall as Shabbat enters. A cacophony of prayer, song, personal reflection and sometimes even dancing; this will be a moment to remember.
- We return to our hotel where we enjoy a special **Shabbat welcome dinner** together. Shabbat Shalom!



Overnight in Jerusalem

Day 3: Saturday, December 23, 2023: SHABBAT SHALOM!

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Join us for optional Shabbat services this morning.
- This afternoon, we enjoy a guided **walking tour** beginning at the **Tower of David Museum** and continuing through history in the **Old City**, exploring the **Jewish and Christian quarters**. We exit through the **Jaffa Gate**.
- Enjoy dinner (*on own*) as Jerusalem returns to life after the calm of Shabbat. We suggest a visit to the Mamilla Pedestrian mall with its varied assortment of cafes and restaurants.
- Later this evening, we walk together to the **Tower of David**, where we enjoy the new **Sound and Light show spectacular!**

Overnight in Jerusalem



Day 4: Sunday, December 24, 2023: MASADA

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Early this morning, we depart Jerusalem and drive toward the **Dead Sea Basin**.
- Those who wish may climb the snake path to the top of **Masada**. The rest of us ascend the desert plateau by cable car. We view the remains of King Herod's palace and fortifications and hear the story of the Jewish Zealots' last stand against the approaching Roman armies.
- We enjoy **lunch** at a Dead Sea resort hotel, followed by an unsinkable swim in the healing, salty waters of the **Dead Sea**.
- Our day ends with a **camel ride** and **desert tent hospitality** at a **Bedouin encampment**.
- This evening, we meet with our Israeli rabbi to review tomorrow's B'nai Mitzvah ceremony. (*Note: B'nai Mitzvah participants are assigned Torah readings of generally 3-5 lines, assigned well in advance, with audio links provided for study. We can also provide resources for tutoring if requested.*).
- Dinner on own tonight.



Overnight in Jerusalem

Day 5: Monday, December 25, 2023: CELEBRATING OUR B'NAI MITZVAH!

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- This morning, we **celebrate our B'nai Mitzvah** in the Old City at the egalitarian section of the Western Wall, known sometimes as the **Kotel HaMishpacha** (*the family wall*), near **Robinson's Arch**. Mazel Tov!
- We enjoy a light **kiddush** as we mark this special occasion.
- We continue to **Ir David, the City of David**, where we wander through the carefully preserved archaeological excavations dating back to the time of King David, including the tunnels (*water tunnels in summer or dry tunnels in winter*).
- Tonight, we enjoy a **gala dinner** in celebration of our B'nai Mitzvah, a festive end to this unforgettable day!

Overnight in Jerusalem



Day 6: Tuesday, December 26, 2023: THE PATH TO ISRAEL'S FOUNDATION

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We pass by the Israeli **Supreme Court**, noting the outstanding architecture filled with symbolism and continue to the **Knesset**, Israel's parliament building. Here, we have a unique photo opportunity by the iconic outdoor bronze menorah sculpture, a gift from the British parliament dating back to the 1950s.
- We tour **Yad Vashem**, Israel's moving memorial and museum to the victims of the Holocaust. Younger children will have the option to visit the nearby Biblical Zoo.
- Next, we stroll through the bustling **Machane Yehuda**, taking in the sights, smells and sounds of the market as we discover its secrets.
- Lunch on own.
- This afternoon, we visit the beautifully renovated **Israel Museum** to view its extensive collections. We walk through the iconic **Shrine of the Book**, which houses the Dead Sea Scrolls, then see the **Holy Land model**, a miniature replica of Jerusalem as it was during the Second Temple period.
- Dinner on own this evening.

Overnight in Jerusalem

Day 7: Wednesday, December 27, 2023: THE JORDAN VALLEY RIFT

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We depart Jerusalem, traveling north through the Jordan Valley.
- We visit **Gesher**, an early kibbutz with restored 14th century buildings and Roman, Turkish and British bridges built over the Jordan River. Bread is baked here every day using the same method as almost 100 years ago. We will **bake bread** in the 1924 stone oven (*winter*).
- We stop to view the Roman ruins of **Beit Shean**, destroyed centuries ago by an earthquake and painstakingly excavated. Then we see the intricate mosaic floor of the synagogue at nearby **Beit Alpha**.
- This afternoon, we cool off at **Aqua Kef**, a fun and refreshing "floating water park" on Yam Kinneret (The Sea of Galilee) (*summer*).
- We continue to the **Galilee** to check into our kibbutz and enjoy **dinner** together.

Overnight at our kibbutz in the Galilee



Day 8: Thursday, December 28, 2023: NORTHERN ADVENTURES

- Breakfast at our kibbutz.
- Today, we visit the mystical city of **Safed**, where we visit the ancient synagogues and have time to stroll among the shops of the artists' quarter. The shops here are famous for featuring Kabbalistic artwork and micro-calligraphy.
- Next, we enjoy an adventurous **jeep tour** up to the **Golan Heights**. Atop the Golan, at **Har Bental**, we take in the amazing panoramic views reaching far into Syria as our guide updates us on the latest geopolitical happenings in the region.
- We try our hand at chocolate making and learn from the experts in a delicious and fun experience at the **Dekarina Chocolate Factory** (*adults may choose instead to enjoy a wine tasting at the adjacent **Bahat Winery!***).
- This afternoon, we once again cool off, this time on a special **kayaking** trip down the Jordan River (*summer*).
- We return to our kibbutz for **dinner** together this evening.



Overnight at our kibbutz in Galilee

Day 9: Friday, December 29, 2023: THE BEAUTY OF THE COAST

- Breakfast and check out of our kibbutz.
- We depart the Galilee for our trip down Israel's west coast shoreline.
- We stop atop the port city of **Haifa** for a panoramic view from **Mt. Carmel**, including the stunning **Bahai Temple** and cascading **Persian Gardens**.
- In **Caesarea**, we explore the seaside relics from ancient times, including the Roman theater and ancient aqueduct, set aside a sparkling turquoise sea.
- We arrive in Tel Aviv and pass by **Rabin Square**.
- We enjoy a stroll along **Nachalat Binyamin**, where the artists and entertainers bring the streets of Tel Aviv to life.
- Later this afternoon, we check into our hotel and refresh before **Shabbat dinner** together this evening.

Overnight in Tel Aviv



Day 10: Saturday, December 30, 2023: FREE DAY IN TEL AVIV

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Enjoy the day at leisure. On own options abound, from visiting Old Jaffa, to strolling along the beachfront promenade, or taking in a museum...or a stand-up paddle boarding lesson! It's a wonderful chance to experience all this metropolitan Mediterranean city has to offer!
- Dinner on own this evening.



Overnight Tel Aviv

Day 11: Sunday, December 31, 2023: DIGGING INTO HISTORY

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We begin today with a visit to **Independence Hall** where the establishment of the state of Israel was declared.
- We journey to the **Bet Guvrin** region through the Haella Valley where the battle between David and Goliath took place. We take part in a unique "hands-on" experience at the **archeological dig** in the caves of **Tel Maresha**. For the more adventurous, an underground cave crawl is included!
(Please wear closed shoes; no sandals or open shoes of any kind.)
- Our last stop today is at the **Ayalon Institute**, the secret underground facility that helped save the state of Israel during the War of Independence.
- After a chance to relax, we gather for our gala **farewell dinner** this evening, as we recall all we have experienced together.

Overnight in Tel Aviv

Day 12: Monday, January 1, 2024: DEPARTURE

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- We bid our new friends farewell (*we'll see you on social media!*)
- We depart for the airport for our flight back to the United States.

OR enjoy our Desert Trek Extension:

Mitzpe Ramon, Eilat & Petra, Jordan



Day 12: Monday, January 1, 2024: TEL AVIV TO EILAT

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- We depart Tel Aviv by bus, heading south into the starkly beautiful Negev Desert.
- On our way to **Mitzpe Ramon**, we stop at **Sde Boker**. Here, we visit the gravesite and original hut of David Ben Gurion deep in the heart of the Negev Desert. It was Ben Gurion's dream to see the desert bloom through Jewish ingenuity and innovation, something we've seen time and again along the way!
- We continue to **Ein Avdat National Park**, where we enjoy the freshwater pools, take in the beautiful natural surroundings and tour the archaeological site.
- Next, we depart for **Mitzpe Ramon**, where we see the massive **Ramon Crater** with views from the **Visitor's Center**.
- We check into our hotel and refresh before **dinner** together this evening.

Overnight in Mitzpe Ramon

Day 13: Tuesday, January 2, 2024: THE MAGNIFICENT RAMON CRATER

- Today, we enjoy a **sunrise jeep tour** through the heart of the **Ramon Crater** as it bathes majestically in the first light of the day. Photographers call dawn (*and dusk*) the "magic hour", and in such a setting, it is easy to see why!
- We return to our hotel for breakfast.
- We check out of our hotel and drive south towards **Eilat**.
- Along the way, we stop at **Timna Park**, located in a majestic desert setting. Here, we discover the history and nature of this amazing place and take a hike through the park to see the ancient mines associated with King Solomon, along with beautiful wildlife, plants and trees.
- We arrive in **Eilat**, check into our hotel and enjoy the afternoon at leisure on the shores of the Red Sea.
- Dinner on own this evening.



Overnight in Eilat



Day 14: Wednesday, January 3, 2024: PETRA - THE EIGHTH WONDER OF THE WORLD

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We cross the border into Jordan and begin our full day tour of **Petra, the Red Rose City**.
- We explore the **Nabatean City** (as seen in *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*). We walk through the **Siq** and view the ancient temples, then discover the famous **Treasury**, the **Roman Theater**, and more at this, the Eighth Wonder of the World.
- We pass **Wadi Rum** before returning to Israel and our hotel for dinner on own.



Overnight in Eilat

(Note: Jordanian visa will be secured through Ayelet Tours prior to travel into Jordan; visa fee including handling of \$69 per person is pre-collected and non-refundable. Border taxes are due in cash in USD at the border crossing – currently \$65 per person. Visa fees and border taxes are subject to change. Bring passport valid for 6 months past travel dates and border taxes in cash on the day you travel to Jordan. Please be sure to wear closed shoes; no sandals of any kind. No food or beverages may cross borders. See VAT info in our travel tips online).

Day 15: Thursday, January 4, 2024: AT LEISURE IN EILAT

- Breakfast at our hotel. Check out and store luggage by normal checkout time.
- Day at leisure in Eilat. Optional (*on own*) activity suggestions include visiting the Underwater Aquarium, enjoying a barbecue lunch and snorkeling cruise on the Red Sea, or just relaxing poolside or seaside!
- Late this afternoon, we depart for the airport to connect with our late-night flight home.

Day 16: Friday, January 5, 2024: ARRIVE HOME

- We arrive home.

The Memories Last Forever!!!

**Itinerary subject to change*

