



# Explore the Holy Land - 10 Days

**\* Sample Group tour itinerary**

## **Day 1. Arrival in Israel**

Arrival at Ben Gurion Airport. You will be met by a Vered Hasharon Tours representative, assisted through customs and transferred to your hotel in Tel Aviv for Dinner and overnight.

## **Day 2. Tel Aviv – Jaffa – Caesarea – Muhraka – Megiddo – Nazareth - Tiberias**

After a delicious breakfast view the Metropolitan city of Tel Aviv and visit Jaffa – South of Tel Aviv which is considered to be the world's oldest sea-port, with Jewish legend attributing it to Japeth, son of Noah and the Greek legend to Joppa, daughter of the gods of the winds. It was here in the 8th Century B.C. that Jonah started his journey to Nineveh. Much of Old Jaffa has been lovingly restored and now houses an artists colony and galleries, together with many churches and mosques which make a unique site. Then travel along the coastal road to Caesarea, an ancient Mediterranean city halfway between Tel Aviv and Haifa, containing many ruins, most of which date from the Crusader period. Prominent among these are the hippodrome, the Crusader city and the Roman amphitheatre. Continue to Muhraka on Mount Carmel with its breath-taking views of Israel. Here Elijah confronted and defeated the prophets of Baal (1 Kings: 18). Travel to Megiddo overlooking the Jezreel Valley which is considered the Armageddon of the New Testament. From here, continue to Nazareth to tour the Church of the Annunciation. Travel to Tiberias for dinner and overnight.

## **Day 3. Capernaum – Mount of Beatitudes – Golan Heights – Jordan River - Tiberias**

Start the day with breakfast followed by a Boat Ride across the Sea of Galilee to Capernaum on the northwest shore where Jesus began his ministry. The town is also well known during Second Temple, Roman and Byzantine periods. Drive up to the Mount of Beatitudes where Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount (Luke 6:20-49). On to Banias, one of the main sources of the Jordan River which runs through lush woodlands and the footsteps of Mount Hermon. Philip, son of Herod, established here the city by the name of Caesarea Philippi and the town is mentioned in the New Testament and Talmud. Drive up the Golan Heights the site of fierce battles between Israel and Syria during 1967 and 1973. Drive to Yardenit where the Jordan River flows out from the Sea of Galilee, this spot was developed as a baptism area. Dinner and overnight in hotel.



#### **Day 4. Jordan Valley – Beit Shean – Jericho - Jerusalem**

After breakfast travel through the beautiful Jordan Valley to Beit Shean to visit the Roman archaeological excavations. Continue via Jericho which is a flourishing oasis in the Judean Desert at the northern end of the Dead Sea. Archaeological research has confirmed Jericho as being the oldest city in the world. Jericho was the first city conquered by Joshua in the Promised Land (Joshua 6:12-25) and it appears as the background for many incidents in the New Testament. Check into hotel in Jerusalem for Dinner and Overnight.

#### **Day 5. New city of Jerusalem - Bethlehem**

Start the day with breakfast to be followed by a full day New City sight-seeing: Mount of Olives – a mountain to the east of the Old City which has been used as a cemetery since ancient times. Christian tradition maintains that many events related to the life of Jesus took place on the mountain, hence the many holy sites that are situated there. Visit Yad Vashem Museum, a memorial to the Jews killed by the Nazis in the Holocaust. Entering through the Valley of the Righteous which commemorates the heroic acts of gentiles who saved Jews, one reaches the Memorial Hall containing an eternal flame and the names of the concentration camps inscribed into the black granite floor. An adjoining hall bears the names of the victims and a photo exhibition and Holocaust library. Drive to Bethlehem where you will visit the birthplace of Jesus. The town is dominated by the Church of the Nativity, built on the grotto where Jesus is believed to have been born. It has many other sites of great historical and religious interest. Dinner and overnight in hotel.

#### **Day 6. Old City of Jerusalem**

After breakfast there will be a full day walking tour of Old City. You will visit Via Dolorosa also called the Way of the Cross which is a series of lanes in the Old City that according to Christian tradition was Jesus' route from Pilate's judgment hall to Golgotha (John 19:16-18). There are 14 Stations along the route each commemorating an event along Jesus' route to crucifixion. Walk through colourful bazaars. View the Temple Mount in the southeast corner of the Old City, this walled in platform was the site of both the First and Second Temples, but is now occupied by five Moslem Mosques. The Dome of the Rock, the Mosque of Al Aqsa, the Dome of the Prophet and the Dome of Elijah. Visit the Western Wall part of the western retaining wall of the Temple Mount, which became the focal point of the Jewish religion after the Second Temple was destroyed. Access to Jews was denied when the area was under Jordanian rule but since the 1967 War, the site has been enlarged and renovated, and archaeological work has been conducted in the vicinity. Return to hotel for dinner and overnight.



### **Day 7. Masada – Dead Sea – Qumran - Jerusalem**

Start the day with a delicious breakfast and then drive through the desert and along the shores of the Dead Sea to Masada a massive rocky outcrop in the Judean Desert 2 km from the shore of the Dead Sea and the site of the most dramatic act in Jewish history when Jewish rebels elected mass suicide rather than submit to Roman capture in 73 A.C.

The site has been fully excavated and the remains of Herod's impregnable fortress have been exposed, as have the remains of the eight roman army camps that surrounded the mountain, and the rebel's living quarters. After the visit there will be time for a swim in the Dead Sea – in Hebrew called the "Sea of Salt" - this is the lowest spot on the surface of the globe. Here you can experience floating and swimming in these waters which have amazing healing powers. Continue to Qumran, the remains of a settlement on the northwest shore of the Dead Sea and the site of the Qumran Caves where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered by desert Bedouins. Return to Jerusalem for dinner and overnight.

### **Day 8. Jerusalem – Soreq – Emmaus – Mini Israel - Jerusalem**

After breakfast visit the Scroll of Fire Memorial. Continue to Soreq Stalactite Cave, a natural cave near Beit Shemesh, deep within the hills of Judea. This miraculous cave is filled with natural sculptures that have been formed over millennia and dazzles visitors with its varied and wonderful world of stalactites and stalagmites many of which are at least 300,000 years old. This unique cave was accidentally discovered in 1968 by workers from a nearby quarry. Drive to Emmaus just outside of Jerusalem which commemorates the resurrection of Jesus after he was crucified days before (Luke 24:13-35). Visit Mini Israel and see mini replicas of the buildings and structures showcasing the country from the North all the way down to the South. Return to hotel for dinner and overnight.

### **Day 9. Day at Leisure**

Today will be a day at leisure to relax, shop and re-visit any site that caught your interest. Breakfast and dinner are provided in hotel.

### **Day 10. Departure**

You will be transferred to Ben Gurion Airport and a Vered Hasharon representative will help you through your formalities. Departure flight.

**\* The above sample itinerary is intended for a group traveling together**