



## Highlights of Israel Tour - 8 Days / 7 Nights

### Sunday arrival

#### Sunday - Arrival

- Upon arrival to Ben Gurion Airport, Tel Aviv, you will be met by our representative and transferred to your hotel in Tel Aviv for overnight.
- Evening at leisure in Tel Aviv.
- Overnight in Tel Aviv.

#### Monday - Masada & The Dead Sea

- Meet your tour guide in the morning and set off from Tel Aviv, driving south, passing by the cities of Ashdod, Ashkelon and Beersheba, the capital of the Negev Desert.
- Continue via Arad to **Masada**, Israel's foremost archaeological park.
- Ascend via cable-car for a thorough visit that gives insight to the rituals, politics and culture of the people who inhabited this desert fortress, which was the last stronghold of the Jewish Zealots in their war against the Romans. Visit the excavations, Herod's palaces, the synagogue, bathhouse and cisterns, and enjoy the breathtaking view of the Roman camps and the Dead Sea.
- Descend to the lowest place on earth – the **Dead Sea**, to experience the mineral-rich black mud and to float in its salty waters.
- Passing by the oasis of Ein Gedi, proceed through the Judean Desert to Jerusalem.
- Overnight in Jerusalem.

#### Tuesday - Jerusalem

- Start the day at the Israel Museum's **Shrine of the Book** with the famous Dead Sea scrolls, then a visit to the beautifully renovated **model of the Herodian city of Jerusalem**, dating back to the time of the Second Temple.
- Visit **Yad Vashem** the official memorial to the Jewish victims of the Holocaust, established in 1953, located at the foot of Mt. Hertzl.
- Enjoy **Ein Karem**; a picturesque village in the south western outskirts of Jerusalem. This small village has great significance in Christian traditions, since this is where according to tradition John the Baptist was born.
- Visit **Bethlehem** – the birthplace of Jesus at the **Church of the Nativity** and **Manger Square**.
- Return to your Jerusalem hotel.

### Wednesday - Jerusalem

- Enter the **Old City of Jerusalem** where you will see the **Western Wall** and the actual site of the Second Temple, the **Temple Mount**.
- Walk the Way of the Cross, the **Via Dolorosa**, to **Calvary** and the **Church of the Holy Sepulchre**, housing both the traditional site of Crucifixion and the Tomb of the Resurrection.
- To the southwest, just outside the Old City, is **Mount Zion**, with the traditional **tomb of King David** and the **Room of the Last Supper**.
- Enjoy the spectacular panoramic view of Jerusalem - the holy city for each of the world's three great religions – Christianity, Judaism and Islam, from atop the **Mount of Olives**.
- Visit the **Garden of Gethsemane** where Judas betrayed Jesus.
- In the heart of a neighborhood in downtown Jerusalem, visit **Mahane Yehuda** to experience the flavors, aromas, colors and the traders' interaction with the crowds, at the largest open market in Israel.
- Overnight in Jerusalem.

### Thursday - Beit Shean / Nazareth / Safed

- Leave Jerusalem and drive north passing by Jericho, the oldest city in the world.
- Travel through the Jordan Valley and the new settlements to **Beit Shean**, and visit the excavations of this beautifully preserved Roman City.
- On to **Nazareth** to visit the **Church of the Annunciation** and Christian holy sites.
- Proceed to **Safed**, city of the Kabbalah and centre of Jewish mysticism, to visit the beautiful streets of the artists' colony.
- Overnight in a kibbutz hotel in the Galilee.

### Friday - Golan Heights / Sea of Galilee

- Drive up to the **Golan Heights** passing by Banias, source of the Jordan River, former Syrian fortifications and the Druze villages.
- Enjoy an **Israeli wine country** experience, with vineyards surrounded by breathtaking views. Become acquainted with the collection of fine and rare wines enjoying a tour, wine tasting and understanding of the wine production process.
- Descend to the shore of the **Sea of Galilee** and proceed to **Capernaum**, to visit the ruins of the ancient synagogue, the **Mount of Beatitudes**, traditional site of the 'Sermon on the Mount' and **Tabgha**, the traditional site of the 'miracle of the loaves and the fish'.
- Onwards to **Tiberias**, the old center of Jewish learning.
- Optional **sailing on a boat across the Sea of Galilee** to experience the tranquility and scenery little changed during the past 2000 years (subject to conditions and fee).
- Return to the kibbutz hotel for overnight.

### **Saturday - Acre / Haifa / Caesarea / Tel Aviv**

- After breakfast drive through the hills of the Galilee, westwards to **Acre** (Akko) for a visit of the old, famous Crusader stronghold and medieval fortifications.
- Continue to **Haifa**, ascending Mount Carmel for a panoramic view of the city, including the Baha'i Shrine, Persian Garden, and Haifa bay.
- Proceed along the Mediterranean coast to **Caesarea** to visit the Roman Theater and the Crusader fortress at what is known as the "masterpiece of Herod the Great".
- End the day with a short city tour of **Tel Aviv** and the ancient port of **Jaffa**.
- Overnight in Tel Aviv.

### **Sunday - Departure**

- Transfer to the airport for departure.

Please note that the sequence of the tour and sites visited may be amended due to circumstances at the company's or the guide's discretion.