



Congregation B'nai Israel - Israel Tour
Led by Rabbi Mitch Parker
May 22-31, 2018

Day 1: Tuesday, May 22nd-Arrival in Israel

- **3:00pm Arrival** at Israel's Ben Gurion international airport. After airport procedures, we are met by our tour educator and escorted to our coach transportation.
- Transfer to **Tel Aviv**.
- Proceed to our hotel for check-in. We relax and refresh following the long flight, as well as prepare for the evening.
- Together, we enjoy a delicious **welcome dinner** at a leading Tel Aviv restaurant TBD.

Overnight: Tel Aviv

Day 2: Wednesday, May 23rd-Identity in Israel/Ascent to Jerusalem

- After breakfast, we check-out of our hotel accommodations.
- See a different side of Tel Aviv with **Guy Sharett**, linguist extraordinaire, who will guide you through the streets of the trendy and bohemian Florentine neighborhood and share with you the social and political voices of his city and country by deciphering the incredible **graffiti street art** on the walls (not included in tour cost).
- Experience the delicious sights, smells, sounds and tastes of the **Carmel Market**-lunch on own.
- Travel through the Judean Hills to the **Jerusalem Forest**, to go for a short **nature hike** among the terraced hillside of the **Sataf Spring**.
- Ascend to **Jerusalem**.
- Upon entering the city, we proceed to the **Haas Promenade**. Offering visitors what is literally a breathtaking overlook of Jerusalem, its location in southern portion of the city offers an expansive vantage point over the entirety of the **Old City**, as well as the eastern slopes of the Judean Hills as they roll and flow downwards towards the Dead Sea and the high mountains of Moab in Jordan beyond. Led by **Rabbi Parker**, we say a special **Shehecheyanu**, blessing our safe arrival in the Land of Israel and the eternal city of Jerusalem.
- Proceed to our hotel for check-in.
- Free evening at leisure, dinner on own.

Overnight: Jerusalem

Day 3: Thursday, May 24th-Spiritual & Political Divides

- Visit the **City of David**- Experience firsthand 5,000 years of history as we descend into the ancient foundations of King David's Jerusalem. Here, our tour will take us through the newly excavated ancient tunnel which runs beneath the Old City walls into the area near the base of the Temple Mount and exit adjacent to the **Southern Wall Excavations** at the Davidson Center. Here, we shall witness and explore the grandeur of what was once one of the most formidable sites in the Roman world. Learn about the place and role of the Temple to the Jewish people both historically and today.
- Visit the **Kotel-the Western Wall**, the ancient retaining wall of the 2nd Temple which stood on the Temple Mount (the holiest site in the world for the Jewish people) and a centerpiece for Jewish prayer and longing since biblical times. Here you will have an opportunity for personal prayer and reflection at this monumental site.
- Next, we will meet representatives of the **Israel Religious Action Center (IRAC)**, Israel's preeminent civil and human rights organization addressing issues of Jewish identity, religion and state. Directed by Anat Hoffman, IRAC acts to advance pluralism in Israeli society and to defend the freedoms of conscience, faith and religion (not included in tour cost).
- Lunch on own.
- In the afternoon, we will participate in a **Jerusalem Seam Line** tour. Travel along the separation fence with him as he explains the considerations and negotiations which went into its construction and how its presence has impacted the city of Jerusalem (not included in tour cost).
- Afterwards, we travel south of Jerusalem and across the Green Line to the **Gush Etzion settlement bloc** and the largest concentration of Jewish settlements in Judea & Samaria (the West Bank).
- In **Efrat**, meet with the settlement's founder and leader **Rabbi Shlomo Riskin**. Learn about the guiding rational and meaning behind the modern settlement movement, as well as discuss the complex and nuanced challenges which it faces (subject to availability).
- Return to Jerusalem.
- Free evening at leisure (restaurant recommendations will be provided).

Overnight: Jerusalem

Day 4: Friday, May 25th-Rebirth & Renewal/Erev Shabbat

- After breakfast, visit **Yad Vashem**, considered the foremost memorial to mankind's darkest period and Israel's official memorial and historical museum to the victims of the Shoah.
- Meet with locals, both **Israelis and Palestinians** who struggle to carry on as normal a life as possible in spite of the separation fences and roadblocks, among them former prisoner **Ali Abu Awwad** and **Shaul Judelman** of the **Roots NGO** who work together at promoting peaceful dialogue and co-existence (not included in tour cost).
- Return to the hotel to relax and prepare for Shabbat.
- This evening, together with Rabbi Parker, we join in **Kabbalat Shabbat** services at **Congregation Moreshet Yisrael**, located at the **Fuchsberg Center**-the physical heart of Masorti (Conservative) Judaism in the center of Jerusalem.
- Enjoy **Shabbat dinner** at the hotel.

Overnight: Jerusalem



Day 5: Saturday, May 26th-*Shabbat in Jerusalem*

- Enjoy breakfast in the hotel's main dining room.
- Experience the atmosphere of Shabbat in Jerusalem at leisure. For those interested in attending Shabbat morning services at nearby area synagogues, a list will be provided. (Optionally, services can be led at the hotel by Rabbi Parker).
- **Special touring options can include (pick one):**
 - **Walking tour of Yemin Moshe.** Yemin Moshe was the first Jewish neighborhood to be established in the modern era outside the walls of the Old City. The picturesque 19th century area, founded by Moshe Montefiore, has seen quite its share of the city's tumultuous modern history; it sits on the seam between East and West.
 - Experience the sites of the **Christian Quarter** together with **Hannah Bendcowsky**, program director of the Jerusalem Center for Jewish-Christian relations. Walk through several of the Stations of the Cross along the **Via Dolorosa**, and conclude inside the **Church of the Holy Sepulcher**, held by believers to be the site of Jesus's execution and burial. Receive interesting insights into the status of Israel's multi-ethnic Christian community and the issues of identity it faces as a small minority living in a Jewish state with a sizable Muslim minority.
 - **Discovering Hidden Gems of the Old City.** Stroll through the shuks (markets) of the Christian and Muslim Quarters, as well as the covert courtyards and alleyways of the Jewish Quarter. Discover the history, stories, people and places that make this city unique. View the city from special lookout points in all quarters and discover the hidden treasures that the city has to offer.
 - Explore the **Jewish Quarter** and hear the story of its destruction during the War of Independence and its rebirth and renewal following the conquest of the Old City during the Six Day War. Stroll along the **Roman Cardo** where traditionally shops were located (and are located today).
 - Visit the **Israel Museum**. The Museum houses encyclopedic collections, including works dating from prehistoric times to today. The Jewish Art and Life wings feature the most extensive holdings of biblical and Holy Land archaeology in the world. While here, a visit to the Shrine of the Book, which houses the **Dead Sea Scrolls** (the oldest biblical manuscripts in the world), and the model of Jerusalem in the Second Temple period are a must.
 - Special afternoon **learning/study opportunities** with Rabbi Parker.
- As Shabbat comes to a close, we gather together for a beautiful **Havdalah ceremony**, led by Rabbi Parker, to be held amongst the ancient ruins of the Tower of David or other inspiring location (subject to availability).
- Dinner on own (restaurant recommendations to be provided).
- **Optional night tour possibilities:**
 - Explore the famous **Western Wall Tunnels** as they stretch under the homes of the Muslim Quarter and make their way along the entire length of the Temple Mount (subject to availability).



- Experience the breathtaking digital choreography of the **Night Spectacular Sound & Light Show** at the Tower of David Museum. Utilizing the dramatic backdrop of the Tower of David Citadel as a canvas, this one-of-a-kind high-tech performance brings to life the ancient city of Jerusalem.

Overnight: Jerusalem

Day 6: Sunday, May 27th-*Nuanced Moments on the Ascent to the Galilee*

- After breakfast, we check-out of our hotel and depart Jerusalem.
- Visit the impressive **9/11 Memorial** located in the Jerusalem forest outside the city. Created following the 2001 attacks, this memorial overlooking a breathtaking view of the region commemorates the tragic loss of life as well as the heroic sacrifice of the first-responders who lost their lives in an effort to save others and provides an excellent platform to discuss the importance of the cultural and diplomatic ties which encompass the U.S.-Israel relationship (subject to road conditions at the time of visit).
- Located in the foothills of the Judean Mountains, we take an easy **hike** along the path of the **Burma Road**. Accompanied by renowned Jewish educator **Joe Perlov** (not included in tour cost), we will focus on some of the more challenging aspects of Israel's complex creation and the effects of the outcome of the 1948 War of Independence on the broader region vis a vis Arab villages which were are aren't today. Together, we will discuss the ways in which this complex and nuanced topic resonates on modern Jewish and Israeli identity.
- Travel north along Israel's highway 6. For much of the way, the highway runs adjacent to the separation fence at places where it straddles the border at its narrowest point-only 8 miles between the Mediterranean Sea and the West Bank.
- **Lunch** en route.
- Journey north along Israel's coastal highway to the **Galilee region**.
- En route, stop in the quaint village of **Zichron Yaakov**. Founded by the '*Chalutzim*' (pioneers) of the First Aliya with the generous assistance of the Baron Edmund James de Rothschild in 1882, here we will learn about the trials and tribulations of the fledgling 'Yishuv' of Jewish pioneers and their perplexing efforts to settle the land of Israel under the most difficult of conditions.
- Proceed across the Galilee region to our Kibbutz guest house on the shores of the **Sea of Galilee** for check-in.
- **Dinner** at the kibbutz.
- This evening, delight in the togetherness of an Israeli "**Kumsitz**" bonfire **or** go on a spectacular torch lit tour of **Nimrod's Fortress**, an ancient castle situated on the slopes of Mt. Hermon (not included in tour cost).



Overnight: Kibbutz Guesthouse, Sea of Galilee

Day 7: Monday, May 28th-*Overcoming Challenges*

- After breakfast, visit the **Kinneret Courtyard** near the shores of the Kinneret (the Sea of Galilee) – Learn about the history of cooperative settlement of Israel and farming in the early 20th century. The courtyard includes a khan (rest house) built in 1870, where the first visitors to the farm stayed, and various other buildings.



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- At the **Kinneret Cemetery**, study the words of Rachel the poetess whose prose beautifully articulates the dreams of Israel's pioneers, and visit the gravesite of the iconic Israeli songwriter Nomi Shemer, who penned the famous "Yerushalayim shel Zahav."
- Tour the mystical city of **Safed**, one of the Four Holy Cities according to tradition and the birthplace of Jewish Mysticism. Stroll through the narrow, winding alleys; visit some of the beautiful and historical synagogues and browse through the artists' workshops and galleries found in the flourishing artists' quarter. Enjoy lunch on own.
- Next, ascend the **Golan Heights** via **off-road jeeps** to **Mt. Bental**. There, learn about the nuanced challenges and complexities of the ongoing Syrian civil war and its impact on Israel's geopolitics.
- Enjoy a tour and tasting at Kibbutz Ein Zivan's **Pelter Winery**, which crafts diverse and high-quality wines influenced by Australian concepts and attitudes. Here, brothers Tal & Nir Pelter use grapes of the same variety grown in different locales to enrich the depth and diversity of their wines.
- Return to our Kibbutz guesthouse.
- **Dinner** at the kibbutz.
- This evening, meet with a kibbutz member to discuss the status of life on the kibbutz in the modern era.

Overnight: Kibbutz Guesthouse, Sea of Galilee

Day 8: Tuesday, May 29th-Diverse Encounters

- After breakfast, we check-out of our accommodations and depart the region.
- Visit the newly excavated synagogue and remains of the 1st century Jewish community which was once present at **Magdala**. Learn how this site is building bridges between Jews and Christians in Israel and around the world.
- Travel across the Upper Galilee to the Arab village of **Majd al Krum**. There, visit **Moona: A Space for Change**-former IAF fighter pilot **Assaf Breimer's** endeavor to advance and bring together Jewish and Arab Israeli teens through learning space science & technology.
- Drive south across the Galilee to **Mount Carmel**.
- Stop in the secluded **Druze village of Usfiya**. Here you will meet with members of this fascinating minority community over a **home hospitality lunch**. Learn about some of the tenets of this special faith-community and discover the bonds that tie their livelihoods to the Jewish State.
- Continue down the Mediterranean coast to the city of **Hadera**. There, we encounter a local center of the **Ethiopian National Project (ENP)**. Together with locals, learn about the unique challenges and problems faced by the Ethiopian-Jewish community living in Israel's periphery and how NGO's such as the ENP are making great strides to empower local residents (not included in tour cost) **OR** Visit **Caesarea**.
- Proceed to **Tel Aviv**.
- Check-in to our hotel accommodations.
- Free evening at leisure (restaurant recommendations will be provided).

Overnight: Tel Aviv



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Day 9: Wednesday, May 30th-Tel Aviv: From Pioneering Heritage to Creative Culture

- After breakfast, we travel to the nearby city of Rehovot to visit the historic **Ayalon Institute**, where the Hagana produced munitions in secret under the noses of the British authorities in pre-state Palestine.
- Return to Tel Aviv.
- Take dual narrative tour of **ancient Jaffa** with your Jewish guide, and an Arab guide, telling both narratives of the city. Possible site visits may include:
 - A hint of hope at the **Orchard of Abraham's Children** – a bilingual kindergarten.
 - Visit the local **El Mahmudiya Mosque**.
- Enjoy **lunch** at Jaffa's iconic **Dr. Shakshuka**
- On a walking tour, learn about how Tel Aviv became known as the "White City" and a UNESCO World Heritage Site as you explore **Rothschild Boulevard** and the beautiful architecture surrounding you. Discover the history of the first Hebrew city and its impact on the Israeli landscape.
- Explore the recently opened "**State of Mind**" **Israel Innovation Center** in partnership with the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange. This exciting center, a "Start Up Nation" museum, highlights Israeli achievements in entrepreneurship, innovation, and technology in a variety of sectors including agriculture, medicine, defense, cyber security, science, transportation, and aerospace.
- Visit **Independence Hall**, the site where David Ben Gurion proclaimed Israel's independence on May 14th, 1948.
- Return to the hotel.
- This evening, we gather one last time together for a special **farewell dinner** at a leading Tel Aviv restaurant, and reflect on our shared experience.

Overnight: Tel Aviv

Day 10: Thursday, May 31st-Departure

- After breakfast, we check-out of our hotel accommodations.
- Transfer to **Ben Gurion airport** for our international **flight** back home, departing at **1:15pm**.





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LAND ONLY

Accommodation based on:

CITY	HOTEL	DATES	NIGHTS	ROOM CATEGORY
Tel Aviv	Prima City	May 22 – 23, 2018	1	Standard Room
Jerusalem	Prima Kings	May 23 – 27, 2018	4	Standard Room
Galilee	Pastoral Kfar Blum	May 27 – 29, 2018	2	Deluxe
Tel Aviv	Prima City	May 29 – 31, 2018	2	Standard Room

Number of Participants	Price per person
15 – 19 Participants	\$3,489.00
20 – 24 Participants	\$3,139.00
Single Supplement	\$927.00

Included services

- One arrival transfer from Ben Gurion Airport to hotel
- One departure transfer from hotel to Ben Gurion Airport
- Assistance/ meet and greet at airport upon arrival and departure
- 8 overnights hotel accommodation at the above-mentioned hotels
- 1 Free in a double room.
- Porterage at hotels and airport
- 9 days touring with private English-speaking Government licensed guide
- 8 days transportation with a licensed driver in an air-conditioned deluxe vehicle
- Entrance fees included as per the itinerary detailed attached.
- Speaker fees as per the itinerary
- Full Israeli buffet breakfast at hotels daily
- 5 dinners and 3 lunches, as per itinerary- 1 glass of wine per dinner.
- Water on the bus (3 small bottles per day per person)

Not included:

- Personal expenses

- Meals not mentioned above or drinks during meals, unless specified above.
- Tips to driver, guide and hostess
- International airfare
- Health and travel insurance
- Meeting/ expenses at congregation Moreshet Yisrael.

Insurance

We strongly recommend to purchase comprehensive health coverage and trip cancellation insurance.



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