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**Explore Israel with the Montebello Jewish Center and the Jewish Community Center of Long Beach Island**

**Led by Rabbi Richard Hammerman and**

**Rabbi Michael S. Jay**

**February 8 –17, 2017**

**Cost will be Approximately $2,300.00 Per Person Plus Airfare Which is expected to be about $850.00**

(Draft September 6, 2016; Subject to change)

**Wednesday, 8 February – *Depart USA***

**Thursday, 9 February – *Going up to Jerusalem – An Ancient Jewish Legacy***

* Morning arrival in **Israel** to be met and assisted by your ITC representative *(today’s program depends on arrival time).*
* Drive to Jerusalem.
* **Shekhiyanu**-Welcome ceremony overlooking the **Old City of Jerusalem**.
* Discover the archaeological story of the **Western Wall** and episodes from rabbinic texts while standing where Jewish pilgrims walked 2,000 years ago at **Robinson's Arch** and **the Southern Wall Excavations.**
* Lunch on own in **Jewish Quarter**.
* Tour of **Jewish Quarter** including the **Cardo, Broad Wall** and **Rooftops** followed by free time to shop and explore on own.
* Check-in to the **Prima Kings Hotel** or **Dan Jerusalem Hotel, Jerusalem**.
* **Welcome dinner** and **orientation** at **Olive and Fish Restaurant**.
* Overnight: Prima Kings or Prima Royale Hotel, Jerusalem

**Friday, 10 February – *Holocaust, Remembrance and Continuity***

* Tour of **Yad Vashem** Israel's national Holocaust memorial and museum, including the **Historical Museum** and **Children’s Memorial**.
* Explore the raucous **Machane Yehuda Market** and take in a slice of local life as you see Jerusalemites prepare for Shabbat. See the picturesque **Nachalaot** neighborhoods along the way.
* Free time to relax and prepare for Shabbat.

**Friday/Shabbat evenings options:**

* Join hundreds of other Jews from around the world to ***Greet the Sabbath*** at the

**Western Wall**. Option to pray together as a congregation at the **"Masorati Kotel**", where men and women can stand together.

* ***OR***: Attend **Friday night services** at a local Jerusalem synagogue.
* ***OR:* Friday services** overlooking the **Old City of Jerusalem.**
* **Festive Shabbat Dinner** at hotel
* Overnight: Prima Kings Hotel or Dan Jerusalem Hotel, Jerusalem

**Saturday, 11 February – *And on the Seventh Day… in Jerusalem***

* **Shabbat morning services** at a local Conservative/Masorati synagogue, followed by kiddush and an update about the Conservative/Masorati movement in Israel (hotel location will determine venue and Masorati Movement representative).
* **Shabbat Lunch** at hotel
* **Afternoon walking tour** to be determined with Rabbi Hammerman.
* **Havdalah** with Rabbi Hammerman
* Dinner on own.
* Watch the **Night Spectacular – Sound and light show** at the **Tower of David**.
* Overnight: Dan Jerusalem Hotel or Prima Kings Hotel, Jerusalem

**Sunday, 12 February – *Masada and the Dead Sea***

* + Set out across the **Judean Desert** and ascend **Masada** by cable car to tour the ruins of Herod's palace and the last outpost of Jewish independence: ***Discussion: Which Jewish Legacy – Masada or Yavne?***
* Swim in the **Dead Sea**, the lowest place on earth, at a local resort. The resort also has a fresh water pool and spa facilities. Massage and spa treatments available by prior reservation at own expense.
* Lunch at Dead Sea resort.
* *Time permitting:* Visit the ruins of **Qumran**, where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered.
* Travel north through **Jordan Valley**.
* Check in to the **Kibbutz Lavi Hotel** on **Kibbutz Lavi** in the **Galilee**.
* Dinner at hotel
* Overnight: Lavi

**Monday, 13 February** – ***Mystical Tzfat and the Strategic Golan Heights***

* Explore mystical **Tzfat's** old synagogues and picturesque alleys - Discover the origins of our Friday night service where ***Lecha Dodi***was written.
* Lunch on own.
* Tour the strategic **Golan Heights** and "look down at Israel below" the way the Syrian army once did.Then look out from the peak of **Mt. Bental** to gain a special perspective on Israel's complex geopolitics.
* Meet **Tova Hadad,** a local resident and Rabbi Hammerman's niece, on **Moshav Avnei Eitan**, to hear about living and pioneering in the Golan Heights.
* Dinner at **Zigel Restaurant** on Moshav Avnei Eitan
* Return to Lavi
* Overnight: Lavi

**Tuesday, 14 February** – ***From the Cradle of the Mishna to Modern Tel Aviv***

* Tour of **Lavi** led by a local ***kibbutznik*** to hear first hand about **kibbutz life**.
* Explore ancient **Tzippori** and study Jewish texts in the ruins of the city where Rabbi Judah Hanasi sealed the Mishna. Discover its magnificent mosaics, including **Mona Lisa of the Galilee** and ponder why an **ancient synagogue** has a wheel of the zodiac on its floor.
* Lunch and learn with **Rabbi Yoav Ende** on **Kibbutz Hanaton**, Israel's only Masorati kibbutz.
* Travel to **Tel Aviv**
* Check-in at the **Metropolitan Hotel, Tel Aviv Hotel** on **Tel Aviv**'s **Mediterranean Coast**.
* Visit the **"Aliyah Bet" Memorial** in **London Square** (two blocks from hotel) to hear the story of the daring illegal immigration operations which rescued Jewish refugees before the founding of the State of Israel.
* Free evening
* Dinner on own
* Overnight: Metropolitan Hotel, Tel Aviv

**Wednesday, 15 February *– Immigration and Innovation: The Story of Israel***

* Discover **Ethiopian Jewish** culture at the **Tobaje Community Center** in **Ramle**. Hear about this community's modern day Exodus story and the challenges facing the Ethiopian Israeli community today.
* Travel to **Rehovot** for a guided tour of the **Ayalon Institute** – an underground bullet factory used by Jewish forces before the founding of the State of Israel.
* Lunch on own
* Visit **Shafdan** A cutting-edge water treatment and recycling plant which hhas made Israel the world leader in recycling waste water for agriculture.
* Walking tour of historic "**Little Tel Aviv**" - Discover the quaint **Neve Tzeddek** neighbourhood that gave birth to the "first Hebrew city in 2,000 years".
* Dinner at hotel
* Free evening
* Overnight: Metropolitan Hotel, Tel Aviv

**Thursday, 16 February– *The Hebrew City and the Jewish State***

* Visit the **Palmach Museum** in **Ramat Aviv** for a multimedia presentation about the elite underground organization that played a critical role in founding the State of Israel.
* At **Independence Hall** relive David Ben Gurion declaring the new State of Israel.
* Hear about the establishment of **Tel Aviv** standing at the **Founders' Monument** on**Rothschild Boulevard** and see the **Bauhaus** architecture for which central Tel Aviv was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
* Tour the alleys of **Old Jaffa,** the ancient port city once known as the *Gate of Zion*. Lookout over modern Tel Aviv from the top of **Tel Jaffa** and hear about the vision of founding the*first Hebrew city in 2,000 years*.
* Remainder of afternoon free to relax, pack and get in last minute shopping.
* **Late Check out**
* Farewell Dinner at **Maganda Yemenite Restaurant**
* Transfer to Ben Gurion Airport – ***See you again soon!***

**Sunday, 1 February *- Arrive in USA***

* Begin planning next **Israel trip** with Rabbi Hammerman and ITC Tours!