

Our Israel Trip Log Book

After a good night's sleep and a wonderful Israeli breakfast, we visited Ir David, the original city of David and explored the excavations including the Hezekiah's tunnel. The day continued through the Old City, the Jewish Quarter and the Western Wall. Isaac's Bar Mitzvah project involved raising money for special items for the IDF. The organization arranged a special meeting at the Kotel with the border patrol, which was amazing! A few Chinese tourists tried to jump into the picture!

Although there are no pictures from Shabbat in Jerusalem, it was a beautiful, interesting and adventure filled Shabbat. After Shabbat we went to the sound and light show at The Tower of David Museum. We just had a beautiful Havdalah led entirely by the students.

On Sunday we hiked through the Ein Gedi nature preserve, then covered ourselves in mud and floated in the Dead Sea. Next, was visiting the fortress atop Massada and touring King Herod's palace. Short Camel rides were part of the day's adventure. When the camels stands, it is not for the faint of heart according to the kids.

Yom Hazikaron, Israeli Memorial Day, was a very somber day. It was also an authentic Israeli day as we got stuck in massive traffic jams and had to walk to Yad Vashem because the bus was not allowed through the area. We met with an Israeli IDF Combat Veteran, and stood at attention as the sirens marking the solemn occasion sounded. All of Israel came to a halt. It was very powerful to see a tiny glimpse of the country, and knowing that everyone was in unison.

Then, in the evening we transitioned to Yom Haatzmaut, Israeli Independence Day. What a party in Israel! First, we stocked up on some party goods on Jaffa Street. Then we joined Chaim's Uncle Avi and Aunt Rachelle who invited us for an awesome BBQ. Finally, we went to Ben Yehuda Street which was packed! On the way back to the hotel, we saw police horses, which was a big hit. Finally, after being back at the hotel for only 5 minutes, we heard fireworks which were set off from a park just a few blocks away. What a night!

Stay tuned for next week's recap of our trip to the North, Safed, staying on a Kibbutz and traveling to Tel Aviv! Thank you again to all who supported this once in a lifetime trip to for our 7th and 8th grade students.