

TRAVEX

— ISRAEL TRAVEL EXPERTS —

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PRIVATE TOUR OF

ENCHANTING

ISRAEL

INCLUDING PETRA

SUGGESTED ITINERARY

15 days / 14 nights

The Enchanting Israel tour is a comprehensive tour traversing the country from the Galilee in the north to the Negev desert in the south. Explore ancient ruins and encounter the modern country. This program invites the visitor to *experience* Israel – up close and personal.

Program is for Independent Travelers

Day 1 / Thursday

Welcome to Israel!

Arrival at Israel's Ben Gurion International Airport, VIP assistance through airport formalities and transfer to **Tel Aviv**, Israel's cultural and commercial capital. Check in to hotel.

Overnight in **Tel Aviv**

Day 2 / Friday

City tour of **Tel Aviv** and **Jaffa**.

Drive through various neighborhoods in Tel Aviv, such as **Neveh Tzedek**, the historic **train station** complex, the open-air **Carmel Market**, **Rabin Plaza**, and the Bauhaus area -- a World Heritage Site.

Visit the **Palmach Museum** of the pre-State Jewish fighting forces

Continue along Tel Aviv's seaside promenade to the ancient Biblical port city of **Jaffa**, with cobbled streets and artists' galleries.

Overnight in **Tel Aviv**

Day 3 / Saturday

Breakfast at hotel.

Depart Tel Aviv and drive north along the Mediterranean coast. Start with a visit to **Caesarea** to view excavations from Roman, Byzantine and Crusader periods, and view the multimedia show. Stop in the quaint village of Zichron Yaakov. Visit the site of **Atlit**, the "illegal" immigrant detention camp which tells the story of the struggle of Jews fleeing Europe and trying to reach British-controlled Palestine. Continue to Haifa for a panoramic view of the city from atop Mt. Carmel, including the bay, and the **Bahai Shrine and Persian Gardens** (a World Heritage Site).

Overnight in **Haifa**

Day 4 / Sunday

Breakfast at hotel.

Travel north along the Mediterranean coast to the city of **Akko**. Visit the Crusader ruins and re-live the story of the famous prison break, recounted in Leon Uris' *Exodus*. Akko is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

On to **Rosh Hanikra**, along the northern border. Descend by cable car to the underwater grottos. Travel through the Galilee to **Tiberias**, on shores of the Sea of Galilee.

Overnight in **Galilee**

Day 5 / Monday

Breakfast at hotel.

Northern border tour. Pass by the UN Force outposts, and meet **Tzahal's (IDF) combat soldiers.** (It is customary to bring some souvenirs or small gifts from your hometown for the soldiers, such as baseball caps, T-shirts, etc.)

Visit the **Golan Heights**, including **Mount Bental**, for a view of the surrounding area.

Optional off-the-beaten-path jeep tour in the Golan Heights.

Overnight in **Galilee**

Day 6 / Tuesday

Breakfast at hotel.

Continue to the mystical city of **Safed**—famous for Jewish “Kabbala”. Meander through the narrow alleys and visit the ancient synagogues and variety of artists’ quarters.

From the top of the **Manara Cliff** enjoy a birds’ eye view of the Hula Valley, Mount Hermon and Golan Heights. Descend by cable car to Kiryat Shmona.

Continue to the **Dan Nature Reserve**, one of the three sources of the Jordan River, for a visit and short hike. Explore the nature reserves of the **Hula Valley**, featuring a wide variety of Israel’s flora and fauna including a bike ride around the lake.

Overnight in **Galilee**

Day 7 / Wednesday

Breakfast at hotel

Depart Tiberias and travel south to **Kibbutz Degania**, the first kibbutz established in 1910 by Jewish Zionist pioneers. Visit the old courtyard and see its first buildings and a small museum that describes life in Israel’s first kibbutz. **Meet with a kibbutz member.**

Continue to the ancient city of **Beit She’an** – one of the Roman Decapolis cities - with extensive on-going excavations. Visit the nearby **Beit-Alpha** Synagogue, with its well-preserved mosaic floor of Zodiac design

Drive south along the **Jordan River Valley** – past Jericho and through the **Judean Wilderness** to the **Dead Sea** – the lowest point on earth.

Overnight at the **Dead Sea**

Day 8 / Thursday

Breakfast at hotel

Enjoy the facilities of the hotel and the therapeutic qualities of the **Dead Sea**.

Visit **Masada** - a World Heritage Site - ascend & descend by cable car to view excavations of this famous desert fortress. Visit the new museum where the story of Masada comes to life, "see and feel" the story behind the archaeological finds.

Depart Ein Bokek, and drive south through the **Arava** desert to your hotel in **Eilat**.

Overnight in **Eilat**

Day 9 / Friday

Breakfast at hotel.

Enjoy a day in Eilat, Israel’s southern most city on the Red Sea. Visit the **Underwater Observatory** where you can see the sea life without getting wet! Take a walk on the promenade or enjoy the myriad of water activities.

Overnight in **Eilat**

Day 10 / Saturday

Breakfast at hotel

Pick up at hotel. Drive to Arava border for crossing over into **Jordan** with assistance through border procedures. Drive to **Petra** for a visit.

Walk through the **Siq** and explore highlights of this ancient **Nabatean city**: the Treasury the theater, the tombs and facades and the colonnaded street.

Lunch in Petra After lunch drive back to **Aqaba** for an optional city tour then cross back into Israel and transfer to hotel in **Eilat**.

Overnight in **Eilat**

Day 11 / Sunday

Breakfast at hotel.

Depart Eilat and travel north through the Negev Desert. Stop for an overview of the natural phenomenon of the **Ramon Crater**.

As you reach the center of the country, stop in Rehovot for a visit at the **Ayalon Museum** which functioned as a secret ammunitions factory during the War of Independence.

Drive on to Jerusalem, the capital of the State of Israel.

Overnight in **Jerusalem**

Day 12 / Monday

Breakfast at hotel.

Depart Tel Aviv and head "up" to Jerusalem.

Enter the Old City through **Jaffa Gate**, and visit the **David Citadel Tower** and Museum, for a short introduction and overview of 3000 years of Jerusalem history.

Continue for a walking tour of the renovated **Jewish Quarter**. Stroll through the **Cardo** - the reconstructed main street of Byzantine Jerusalem.

View of the Temple Mount with the Dome of the Rock and El Aqsa Mosques. Continue to the **Western Wall** -- Judaism's holiest site. Walk through the **Western Wall Tunnels**.

Overnight in **Jerusalem**

Day 13 / Tuesday

Breakfast at hotel

Continue your exploration of Jerusalem with a visit to the ruins and tunnels at the **City of David** including Warren's Shaft and the tunnel of Shiloh.

Continue up to the **Davidson Archaeological Center**, to explore the Southern Wall excavations and Robinson's Arch.

Walk the neighborhood of **Nachlaot**, known for its old-style housing, hidden courtyards and many small synagogues. Visit the **Mahaneh Yehuda** colorful open-air market. Stroll through the market's alleys and experience the taste of a variety of different local food & beverage stalls and shops, to include bakery, spices, cheese, sweets and much more.

Continue to **Ammunition Hill** and explore the bunkers at the official memorial symbolizing the liberation and reunification of Jerusalem.

Overnight in **Jerusalem**

Day 14 / Wednesday

Breakfast at hotel.

Drive through the **New City of Jerusalem**, past the Jerusalem Theater, the President's Residence and the Knesset (Israel parliament). View the **Giant Menorah** depicting Israel's history through the ages. Visit the **Chagall Windows** located in the Abell synagogue at Hadassah's Ein Karem hospital.

Drive to the **Yad VaShem Holocaust Memorial & Museum** for a visit including the Children's Memorial and the Avenue of the Righteous Gentiles.

Proceed to **Mount Herzl**, where Israel's founders and leaders are buried.

Continue with a visit to the **Israel Museum**, including the Model of Jerusalem from Second Temple Period and the Dead Sea Scrolls exhibited in the Shrine of the Book.

Explore the Billy Rose Sculpture Garden.

Overnight in **Jerusalem**

Day 15 / Thursday

Breakfast at hotel.

Departure transfer from Jerusalem Tel Aviv to Ben Gurion Airport.

VIP assistance through departure procedures at the airport.

Shalom U'lehitra'oth

Program sites and sequence subject to change due to scheduling and availability.