

Biblical Lands

8 days | Starts/Ends: Tel Aviv



COACH TOUR - Join us on a Biblical adventure through Israel's most holy sites - explore Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth before heading to the gorgeous region of Galilee. End with fun and sun in the lively city of Tel Aviv.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Haifa - Bahai Shrine, Persian Garden & Mount Carmel
- Jerusalem (West Bank) - Old City - Jewish Quarter, bazaars, Western Wall. Via Dolorosa, Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Mt. Zion, Last Supper Room & King David's Tomb. Israel Museum and the Dead Sea Scrolls, Yad Vashem - World Holocaust Centre.
- Ein Karem - Birthplace of John the Baptist
- Bethlehem (West Bank) - Church of the Nativity and Shepherd's Field
- Jericho - Oldest city in the world
- Beit Shean - excavations of the old Roman city
- Safed - City of Kabala
- Nazareth - Church of the Annunciation & Mary's Well
- Golan Heights - former fortifications & Druze villages

- The picturesque Sea of Galilee and the Miracle Sites
- Caesarea - one of the great cities of antiquity. Roman theatre & Crusader fortress
- Tel Aviv - dynamic city on the Mediterranean coast

What's Included

- 7 breakfasts, 6 dinners
- 7 nights 4 star hotels
- Touring of - Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Beit Shean, Nazareth, Galilee, Acre, Haifa and Caesarea
- Services of local guides for scheduled sightseeing
- Ben Gurion Airport arrival and departure transfer on days 1 and 8
- All transfers and transportation in modern air-conditioned vehicles
- Entrance fees to all included sightseeing
- This tour is operated in conjunction with other tourist groups, not solely On The Go. You will join travellers from a number of different operators, some staying in different hotels for sightseeing each day and spend your evenings at leisure. The sightseeing group may vary in size from 10 - 38 persons.

What's Not Included

- International flights and visa

- Tipping/gratuities for your guide and driver. We recommend you allow USD\$5 - 7 per day, per traveller for your guide and USD\$2 per day for your driver. Tipping your guide and driver is an entirely personal gesture.
- Laundry, drinks and items of a personal nature

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 : Tel Aviv/Jerusalem

Monday. Welcome to Israel and the start of your Biblical adventure. We'll be there to meet you at airport and transfer you to our hotel in greater Jerusalem (West Bank). **Overnight - Jerusalem**

Day 2 : New Jerusalem



Jerusalem (West Bank). Begin the day with a trip to the Mount of Olives for splendid views of Jerusalem. See some of the world's oldest olives trees at the Garden of Gethsemane and discover the glistening mosaics of the

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nearby Church of Agony. Continue to the Israel Museum's Shrine of the Book to see the famous Dead Sea Scrolls and the beautifully renovated Model of the Herodian City of Jerusalem, dating back to the time of the Second Temple (515 BCE – 70 CE). Scattered over 45 acres of the Mount of Remembrance is Yad Vashem, a vast, landscaped complex with a fascinating museum and a dozen memorials built to honor the six million Jews who died during the Holocaust. We pay our respects and learn more about how this tragedy shaped the modern State of Israel. Later we visit the picturesque village of Ein Karem, birthplace of John the Baptist.

Overnight - Jerusalem (B, D)

Day 3 : Old Jerusalem & Bethlehem



Jerusalem - Bethlehem - Jerusalem (West Bank). After breakfast today we head to the spectacular Old City through one of the fabled gates. Within its mighty walls we explore the renewed Jewish Quarter, the 2,000 year old Western Wall, Via Dolorosa – the route that Jesus is believed to have taken as he carried his cross to Calvary, and the Stations of the Cross ending at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the holiest Christian site in the Old City. We'll also have time to wander the colourful bazaars and pick up some souvenirs. Later we make our way to Mount Zion to visit the tomb of King David, the Room of the Last Supper and Dormition Abbey. Spend the rest of the afternoon in Bethlehem visiting the Church of the Nativity and enjoying the views of Shepherds' Fields. **Overnight - Jerusalem (B, D)**

Day 4 : Beit Shean, Nazareth & Safed



Jerusalem - Nazareth - Galilee. Leaving Jerusalem we drive north via Jericho, the oldest city in the world. Continuing via the Jordan Valley we reach Beit Shean and explore the excavations of this beautiful Roman city. Afterwards we proceed to Nazareth and the Church of the Annunciation that dominates the city's skyline. It's the largest church in the Middle East and one of the Christian world's most holy shrines. We also have time to visit Mary's Well. We continue to Safed, city of the Kabala in the northern district of Galilee, for a walk through the mystic alleys and the artists' colony.

Overnight - Galilee (B, D)

Day 5 : Viticulture, Golan & Galilee



Galilee. This morning we drive to Golan Heights, a rocky plateau on the border with Syria, where we see the former Syrian fortifications and the Druze villages. We continue via Banias, source of the Jordan River, to the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Here we visit Peter's House and the ruins of the ancient synagogue in Capernaum, Mount Beatitudes, and Tabgha where the miracle of the Fish & Bread took place. After learning a little about the importance of Israel's diamond industry at a famed emporium, our day ends with a short tour of Tiberias, an ancient centre

of Jewish learning. Hotel: Not officially rated, reviewed as 3-4 star. **Overnight - Galilee (B, D)**

Day 6 : Acre & Haifa



Galilee - Tel Aviv. Driving west we visit the medieval fortifications of Acre, a famous Crusader stronghold. In Haifa enjoy a tour of the Bahai Shrine, Persian Gardens and Mount Carmel for panoramic views of the city. Heading southwards to Caesarea we visit the Roman Theatre and Crusader Fortress before arriving in Tel Aviv, Israel's dynamic party centre on the Mediterranean coast. **Overnight - Tel Aviv (B, D)**

Day 7 : Tel Aviv - your way



Tel Aviv. Today offers free time for you to enjoy Tel Aviv your way. Alternatively, you could opt to take a day trip to the Dead Sea (book locally). **Overnight - Tel Aviv (B, D)**

Day 8 : Tel Aviv

Monday. Our tour concludes today after breakfast. Included departure transfer to Ben Gurion airport. Happy Travels!

HOTELS

The hotels listed below are ones which we frequently use on this tour. We reserve the right to substitute these hotels to ones of a similar standard when necessary.

Leonardo Jerusalem

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The modern Leonardo Hotel is in an ideal base for exploring the sites of Jerusalem. Centrally located within a short walk of famous sites such as the Via Dolorosa, Western Wall and the Old City. Rooms are spacious and tastefully decorated, with all modern amenities. The two restaurants serve delicious local and international cuisine and breakfast is plentiful. After a long day of sightseeing, the large outdoor pool is the perfect place to relax and enjoy a refreshing swim, while those who can't resist a holiday workout can head to the fitness centre.



Hagoshrim Hotel & Nature

A unique hotel in the northern Galilee region of Israel, Hagoshrim Hotel & Nature was built on the ruins of the splendid winter palace of Ottoman ruler Amir Fahur. Surrounded by picturesque water springs and greenery, the hotel offers spacious guestrooms with balconies overlooking the Koren river. Guests can indulge in treatments at the Fiorina Spa or enjoy the facilities of the health and fitness centre, which include a gym, two swimming pools and a sauna. An Israeli breakfast buffet is also available daily, with dinner served in the onsite restaurant.



Hotel Grand Beach

Located just a few minutes walk from Tel Aviv's golden beaches, the Hotel Grand Beach offers a comfortable and luxurious atmosphere. Guest rooms are modernly furnished and include free Wi-Fi. With a number of excellent eating options including a lavish buffet in the 'Jerusalem' dining room. The roof top pool is another highlight affording stunning views of the seafront

and the city and is a great place to cool off! Perfectly located close to the sea front and the bustling city centre with lots of restaurants and cafes nearby.



Touring Arrangements

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KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Welcome to Israel

Israel and the Palestinian Territories are both fascinating and beautiful, rich in culture, steeped in history and home to some of the world's most holy sights, at the cornerstone of the Christian, Jewish and Islamic faiths. The revered Holy Lands, once walked upon by Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, Jesus, the apostles, Baha'i saints, and the Prophet Muhammad (in a miraculous Night Journey), have been a sought-after destination for pilgrims across the world, from ancient times until today. Whilst cosmopolitan Tel Aviv, offers all things modern, the ancient port city of Jaffa which is medieval in appearance, has a laid back Mediterranean seaside resort appeal and the Dead Sea provides the unique opportunity to float in its famously buoyant waters.

Tipping

Tipping is customary within the tourism and service industry in Israel. We would recommend for a job well done you budget USD\$5 - 7 per person, per day for your tour guide and USD\$2-3 if you have a separate driver, however the decision to tip or how much is entirely up to you.

Time & Voltage

Israel is 2 hours ahead of Greenwich Meantime (GMT). Daylight Saving time starts on the Friday before the 02 April. The move back to standard time occurs late September/early October according to the Jewish calendar falling on a Saturday night between Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year) and Yom Kippur. During this period, Israel is 3 hours ahead of GMT. Standard voltage is 220 volts, 50Hz AC. Primary sockets require the Continental or European, 2 small round pin variety. We recommend that you pack a universal travel adaptor. You will need a voltage converter, and plug adaptor in order to use U.S. appliances.

Visas

Please be advised that visa requirements are subject to change and that visa procurement is the responsibility of the traveller and not On The Go Tours. Please also ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months from your planned date of departure from Israel, with two blank pages. British, South African, Australian, New Zealand, USA and Canadian passport holders do not require a visa to enter Israel. For all other nationalities please visit the Israeli embassy website: <http://israel.embassyhomepage.com>

ISRAELI LAND BORDER TAXES: On both arrival into Israel from Jordan, you must take the official border shuttle bus or chartered coach at a cost of JD 6 (about \$8), payable in USD or JD.

Essential Packing

- Bring your own beach towel to make the most of the perfect Tel Aviv Mediterranean beaches
- If visiting in winter, pack warm clothes and an umbrella
- If visiting in summer bring lightweight clothing, sunscreen and a hat
- 3 pin 'type H' Israel electrical adaptor
- Tour voucher and a copy of your travel insurance
- Two spare passport photos and a photocopy of your passport
- Proper walking shoes (joggers/trainers) for sightseeing in the old city of Jerusalem

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Climate

Temperatures vary widely, especially from December – early March. The more mountainous regions can be windy, cold and sometimes snowy; Mount Hermon's peak is covered with snow most of the year and Jerusalem usually receives at least one snowfall each year. Temperatures at this time of year average 10-15°C in most places, but approx 5°C in Jerusalem and the Galilee hills - where it can be very cold at night. In January and February there is often heavy rain.

Meanwhile, coastal cities, such as Tel Aviv and Haifa have a typical Mediterranean climate with cool, rainy winters and long, hot summers (May to early September) when temperatures range from 27°C – 32°C and rainfall is minimal.

Arrival Transfer

Upon arrival to Ben Gurion Airport, our representative, carrying an On The Go Tours signboard, will be waiting to meet you just after passport control before you collect your luggage. Please hand this tour voucher to him/her. If for any reason you are unable to commence your tour as scheduled, or on arrival are unable to make contact with our rep (within 20 minutes) please do not exit the airport, call our emergency contact number as detailed above.

Health Requirements

You should seek medical advice before travelling to Israel from your local health practitioner and ensure that you receive all of the appropriate vaccinations. As a guide Tetanus and Hepatitis A are strongly recommended. The tap water in Israel is generally considered safe to drink, but as a precaution against stomach upsets you may want to drink bottled water, which is readily available from shops, hotels and restaurants.

Food, Wine & Kosher meals

Food in Israel is extremely diverse and generally very good. A well known favourite is falafel – small fried balls of mashed chickpeas, usually served inside unleavened pita bread with houmous (a cream of chickpeas, tehina, onion, lemon and olive oil). Another popular dish is Shawarma, sliced turkey meat which is also served in pita bread. Also try Me'orav Yerushalmi (Jerusalemite mix) which contain

several types of meat, or Schnitzel. Fresh fruit and salads are very popular in Israeli cuisine. Israeli sweets are delightful, try Teiglach - tiny marble sized dough balls drenched in a honey syrup or Ingberlach - ginger candies shaped into small sticks. The Mohn Kihel is a circular or rectangular wafer sprinkled with poppy seed. Pirushkes, or turnovers are little cakes fried in honey or dipped in molasses after they are baked. Strudel is served for dessert.

Alcohol is available at many hotels and restaurant (excluding the Palestinian territories) Maccabee and Gold star, both palatable pale lagers and certified kosher. Israeli wine is produced by hundreds of wineries. The nation's modern Israeli wine industry was founded by Baron Edmond James de Rothschild, owner of the Bordeaux estate Château Laffite-Rothschild. Much of the country is suited for viticulture, prices are fair and top drop can be enjoyed with every meal. If your tour includes dinner in Jerusalem, you are best to re-confirm this information with the hotel reception upon check in. Meals (breakfast and dinners) in the hotel are Kosher. Meaning that you will never find dairy products served served with beef. Pork will not be served nor will various types of shellfish. The combinations may seem a little unusual though there is always plenty of choice to provide a satisfying meal.

Lunches: Where lunch is not included within your itinerary (most days or all days) we suggest you budget \$25 - \$30 per day for an average meal

Currency

The currency of Israel is Israeli New Shekel. Pound Sterling, US Dollars, Euro and other major currencies can be exchanged in Israel. ATMs and exchange facilities are available everywhere. It's advisable to request bank notes in smaller denominations, as it can sometimes be hard to get change from large notes and smaller notes are handy for smaller purchases and gratuities. Traveller's Cheques are not recommended as they're often difficult to exchange and incur high fees.

Culture & Dress

Despite the inevitable ups and downs of travelling abroad, you will generally be shown

great hospitality in Israel. Israel is generally a very relaxed country with a western-oriented outlook. Respect for religion is important to most Israeli's and there are a few situations when this should be kept in mind.

Visitors to some synagogues, most churches and all mosques should be aware that entry will normally not be permitted to those with exposed legs or women with exposed upper arms. Women may be asked to cover bare arms and legs in both mosques and synagogues. Carry a wrap or bring along long sleeve shirts for these occasions. Further, men should cover their heads when entering a synagogue with a hemispherical shaped skullcap called a kippah or yarmulke (often provided by the synagogue) though a normal sunhat is also acceptable and in mosques both men and women will be required to take off their shoes before entry.

Israeli people are generally quite direct in what they have to say. Openness and honesty are often valued over politeness and projection of niceness. Direct personal questions are common and should not be taken as offensive. Israelis are also very kind and hospitable. When you make a friend here, they will do their best to take care of you while you're in their country. Foreign visitors are deeply appreciated and are generally shown the utmost respect by locals.

Optional Activities

The Night Spectacular

If you have a free evening in Jerusalem you may wish to consider attending the city's famed 'Night Spectacular'. Each evening the walls of the Old Jerusalem Citadel serve as the stage for a sound and light show. Amidst the archeological remains in the Citadel's courtyard, and to the sound of original music, the story of Jerusalem is told through stunning visual and lighting displays. An adult ticket costs approximately \$16. Tickets can be purchased online in advance or at the gate (subject to availability). Show times vary, but normally from 8pm in the summer and 7pm in the winter. Check the show website for exact timings.

Sea of Galilee Boat trip

On some of our trips we offer a 2 hour Boat Trip on the Sea of Galilee. Often boarding a wooden boat, resembling those from ancient

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times you'll see gulls overhead and have time to take in the tranquil surrounds. It is here upon the lake that Jesus walked on the water (John 6:19-21), calmed a storm (Matt. 8:23-26), and showed the disciples miraculous catches of fish (Luke 5:1-8; John 21:1-6). The boat trip is offered, dependent on time and number of persons. Should you be interested, please speak with your tours guide.

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