

Highlights of Israel

8 days | Starts/Ends: Tel Aviv



COACH TOUR: From the vibrant coastal city of Tel Aviv, spend 8 days exploring the incredible highlights of Israel. Travelling inland and head for the centuries old city of Jerusalem, where you can see, smell and touch the history that has shaped it, as well as the birth place of Jesus, Bethlehem. Look out across the Sea of Galilee and rise to the top of Mount Carmel in Haifa. Visit the Crusader Castle at Caesarea and end the tour back in Tel Aviv.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Tel Aviv - Explore this cosmopolitan city and the ancient port of Jaffa
- Masada – Take a cable car up to the ancient fortification of Masada and enjoy unrivalled views over the Dead Sea
- The Dead Sea – Float in the famously buoyant, mineral-rich waters
- Jerusalem New City (West Bank) - Admire incredible views of the Old City from Mount Scopus, see the Dead Sea Scrolls in the Israel Museum and visit the World Holocaust Remembrance Centre
- Jerusalem Old City (West Bank) - Explore the sacred sites of the Old City including the Wailing Wall, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and Via Dolorosa
- Bethlehem (West Bank) - Visit the Shepherd's Field, Church of the Nativity and Manger Square
- Beit Shean - Take in the excavations of this beautifully preserved Roman city
- Nazareth - See the Church of the Annunciation and other holy sites
- Safed - Pay a visit to a synagogue and explore the beautiful streets of the artists' colony in the city of the Kabbalah
- The wine region - Learn about wine production on a tour of a vineyard and sample fine wine
- Sea of Galilee - Visit the site of the 'Sermon on the Mount' and the 'Miracle of the loaves and fish' in Capernaum and Tabgha
- Acre - Roam around the old Crusader stronghold and medieval fortifications
- Haifa - Walk through the beautiful terraces of the Bahai Gardens, set on the slopes of Mount Carmel and see the UNESCO listed Bahai Shrine
- Caesarea - Discover Roman and Crusader-era ruins in one of the great cities of antiquity
- Entrance fees for all included sightseeing
- Touring - Masada, Dead Sea, Jerusalem, Ein Karem, Beit Shean, Bethlehem, Nazareth, Sea of Galilee, Acre, Haifa, Caesarea, Jaffa and Tel Aviv
- Vineyard tour and wine tasting in Israel's wine region
- Escorted by an English speaking driver guide
- All transfers and transportation in modern air-conditioned vehicles
- Airport arrival and departure transfer on day 1 and day 8
- This coach 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

What's Not Included

- International flights and visa
- Tip for your tour guide and driver. We recommend you allow USD\$5-7 per day, per traveller for your guide and USD\$2 per day, per traveller for your driver. Tipping your guide and driver is an entirely personal gesture

DETAILED ITINERARY

What's Included

- Breakfast daily and 6 dinners
- 7 nights 4 star hotels

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Highlights of Israel

Day 1 : Vibrant Tel Aviv

Sunday. Upon arrival at the Ben Gurion Airport, you will be met and transferred to your hotel in Tel Aviv. The rest of the evening is at your leisure.

Renowned for its hedonistic nightlife, this dynamic city also offers beautiful beaches, art galleries and markets. And with a variety of trendy bistros, high-end restaurants and delicious street food stalls, there's plenty to choose from, for dinner. **Overnight - Tel Aviv**

Day 2 : Masada Fortress & the Dead Sea

Tel Aviv - Beer Sheba - Masada - Dead Sea - Jerusalem (West Bank). Set off from Tel Aviv, and drive south past the cities of Ashdod and Ashkelon to the Negev capital of Beer Sheba. After a short visit, we continue via Arad to the Masada Fortress which sits atop an isolated rock cliff and was the last stronghold of the Jewish Zealots in their war against the Romans. Ascending by cable car to the fortress offers incredible views of the Dead Sea and at the top explore the excavations of Herod's Palaces, the synagogue and the bathhouse. Later, we descend to the lowest place on Earth to float in the famously buoyant, salt-laden water of the Dead Sea. From the Dead Sea we journey to Jerusalem, passing by the oasis of Ein Gedi and the Judean Desert enroute. Spend the evening at leisure. **Overnight - Jerusalem (B, D)**

Day 3 : Jerusalem New City



Today's sightseeing tour of Jerusalem New City starts at the Israel Museum which houses The Dead Sea Scrolls in the Shrine of the Book. Continue to visit the beautifully renovated Model of the Herodian city of Jerusalem, which dates back to the time

of the Second Temple. The next stop on our tour of the New City is Yad Vashem, The World Holocaust Remembrance Centre. Founded in 1953, Yad Vashem started as an organisation committed to documenting the memory of Holocaust victims. The new museum was opened in 2005 and has 9 galleries of interactive historical displays, all of which are informative, moving and vital to a continued commemoration of those that lost their lives during one of history's darkest periods.

This afternoon we visit the picturesque village of Ein Karem, which is the birth place of John the Baptist. Next, we drive to Bethlehem to visit the birthplace of Jesus at the Church of the Nativity before returning to Jerusalem for the night.

Overnight - Jerusalem (B, D)

Day 4 : Jerusalem Old City & Bethlehem

Step back in time on a tour of Jerusalem's revered Old City today. Enter through one of the Gates to the walled Old City, to visit the renewed Jewish Quarter, the Western Wall (Wailing Wall), the Temple Mount and the colourful souk. Then, we walk along the Via Dolorosa, stopping at the Stations of the Cross enroute to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is one of the world's holiest Christian shrines and the site of Jesus' crucifixion and burial. Continuing your tour, we visit Mt Zion and the tomb of King David, the Room of the Last Supper and Dormition Abbey. Continuing to the Mount of Olives you'll have a spectacular view of this holiest of cities, a place where the three religions of Islam, Judaism and Christianity have tussled for power of the city for centuries.

Next, we visit the Garden of Gethsemane, where Judas betrayed Jesus, before travelling to Downtown Jerusalem to explore bustling Mahane Yehuda, which is Israel's largest open market.

Overnight - Jerusalem (B, D)

Day 5 : Beit Shean, Nazareth & Safed

Beit Shean - Nazareth - Safed - Galilee. Bid farewell to Jerusalem and drive north past Jericho, which is considered to be the world's oldest city. Travelling through the Jordan Valley and the new settlements to Beit Shean, see the excavations of this beautiful preserved Roman city before continuing to Nazareth to visit the Church of Annunciation and other Christian holy sites. Our final stop of the day is Safed, city of the Kabbalah and Centre of Jewish Mysticism, where you'll visit a synagogue and explore the beautiful streets of the artists' colony. Your home for the next two nights is a Kibbutz Hotel in Galilee.

Overnight - Galilee (B, D)

Day 6 : Golan Heights & the Sea of Galilee



Driving to the Golan Heights, we explore the former Syrian fortifications and the Druze villages, passing Banias, the source of the Jordan River. Then, we enjoy a tour of the Israeli wine country, visiting picturesque vineyards where you can take in the wonderful views, learn about wine production and sample fine wines.

Descending to the shore of the Sea of Galilee we take a tour of the Miracle Sites. In Capernaum, we visit the ruins of the ancient synagogue, the Mount of Beatitudes - site of the 'Sermon on the Mount' and Tabgha - site of the miracle of the loaves and the fish. Then travel to Tiberias, the old centre of Jewish learning. This afternoon there is also an optional sailing trip across the Sea of Galilee to experience the tranquillity and beautiful scenery which has hardly changed in the past 2000 years (book and pay locally).

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Then, we return to your Kibbutz Hotel for the night.

Overnight - Galilee (B, D)

Day 7 : Acre, Haifa, Caesarea & Tel Aviv



Galilee - Acre - Haifa - Caesarea - Tel Aviv. After breakfast, we drive through the hills of the Galilee, westwards to Acre where you'll explore this old Crusader stronghold and its medieval fortifications. Continue to Haifa, the largest city in northern Israel which dates back over 3000 years. Sightseeing here includes the UNESCO World Heritage Listed Bahai Shrine and the magnificent gardens on the slopes of Mount Carmel which are spread over 19 terraces, the highest of which is the Persian Gardens where you can enjoy the wonderful panoramic view of the city and Haifa Bay.

Travelling down the coast to reach Caesarea, we'll see the Roman Theatre and Crusader Fortress at what is known as the "masterpiece of Herod the Great". Then, continue our journey to Tel Aviv and end the day with a short city tour of Tel Aviv and the ancient port of Jaffa.

Overnight - Tel Aviv (B, D)

Day 8 : Tel Aviv

Sunday. Arrangements come to an end after breakfast and onward transfer to the Ben Gurion Airport. Alternatively extend your stay to enjoy more time in cosmopolitan Tel Aviv, please enquire. (B)

HOTELS

Highlighted below are some of the hotels which we frequently use on this tour, though we reserve the right to substitute these hotels to ones of a similar standard.

Please refer to your Tour Voucher for your confirmed arrival hotel and further arrival information.

Hotel Metropolitan

Within easy walking distance from major city attractions, Hotel Metropolitan is a modern hotel with excellent amenities. Guest rooms are designed in a contemporary style with soft furnishings and stylish en suite bathrooms. The hotel also has an onsite bar and cafe serving food throughout the day. In the summer head to the outdoor pool with sunbeds - the perfect way to start the day! Perfectly located in the centre and very heart of Tel Aviv.



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.



Hotel Grand Court

Centrally located, the Hotel Grand Court is a very modern hotel and an excellent base for exploring the holy city. Guest rooms are bright and well furnished with free Wi-Fi throughout. The Garden Court is the perfect spot to enjoy breakfast al-fresco. There is

also a refreshing outdoor pool to relax in or by (open April - September). Perfectly located just a short walk from the Old City.



Leonardo Jerusalem

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.



Kibbutz Kfar Giladi

Founded in 1916, the Kibbutz Kfar Giladi is a recently renovated hotel in a former Kibbutz. All of the guest rooms are well furnished and include breathtaking views across the dramatic Golan Heights. Internet access is available and the hotel also offers a sauna and massage service for guests who fancy a bit of pampering. Delicious kosher food is served for breakfast; and lunch and dinner can be ordered upon request. The accommodation is located in Upper Galilee offering stunning views of the Hula Valley and Mount Hermon.

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Touring arrangements

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 - 45 persons.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Israel Country Guide

Welcome to Israel - Arrival airport transfer

A complimentary airport arrival transfer is included. 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 your Tour Voucher to them.

If, for any reason you have trouble locating our representative (after waiting 20 minutes) or your flight to Israel is delayed, please call or send a text message (standard text message, not Messenger or WhatsApp) to the emergency contact number as stated on your Tour Voucher.

Welcome to Israel - Arrival via the Jordan border crossing

For travellers arriving into Israel via the border crossing from Jordan - To complete your Israeli Immigration form you will need to give details of your accommodation in Israel. Please use the following hotel name/address:

**Eyal Hotel, 21 Shamai Street, Jerusalem.
Phone: +972 2-622-1111**

In the unlikely event that our accommodation is not the Eyal Hotel, the Eyal Hotel will be able

to inform the authorities (if required) of your new accommodation arrangements.

If you need assistance whilst in Israel, please contact our Operations Manager: Ms Yettie Kalifa - Mobile: 00972 546 664 261 or Heike Kluss-Oiknine - Mobile 00972 54 620 8798

ISRAELI LAND BORDER TAXES: On 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. After completing immigration, please meet our driver or representative at the 'Help Counter' which is located between the custom desk and the exit door.

If for any reason you have not made contact with your driver, please Do NOT leave the border, contact our Operations Manager, on the number detailed above.

After meeting our driver, we transfer to the hotel. As today is the Sabbath (Friday), hotel check time may vary and may or may not be until after sunset. The afternoon/evening offers free time - head out and explore the old city (which is not half as busy today as normal) or the Jerusalem Museum which is a 30 min walk from the hotel.

Israeli Passport Stamps

Israeli Immigration do not stamp passports but instead provide a ticket (similar to a bus ticket) confirming you have legally entered the country. You must keep this ticket with your passport until your departure from the country.

The following countries, and only these countries (Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Kuwait, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Yemen) take issue with passports containing evidence of travel to Israel. Should you be planning to travel to any of the countries and wish for your passport NOT to contain evidence of having travelled to Israel, you will need to have your Jordanian exit stamp (given at the King Hussein/Allenby Bridge Border crossing), stamped upon a separate piece of paper, which Jordanian officials are willing to do when requested.

Visas & passports

Visa requirements are subject to change and visa procurement is the responsibility of the traveller and not On The Go Tours. Please ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months from your planned date of departure from Israel, with two blank pages.

After booking your holiday, please provide us with your passport details as soon as possible so that we can proceed to book all services. Please be advised visa requirements are subject to change, therefore it is essential that you check current visa requirements with the embassy before travel.

For information about visas, head to www.onthegotours.com/Israel/Visas

Tipping

Tipping is an essential part of the culture. For a job well done, we suggest you budget for your tour guide USD\$5-7 per traveller, for each day of sightseeing. For your driver and/or On The Go Representatives we'd recommend USD \$2-3 per traveller for each day of service. Tipping is an entirely personal gesture and ultimately the amount is up to you.

Health requirements & water

You should seek medical advice for vaccinations and about medications before travelling.

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.

Essential packing

Please check local temperatures so you can pack accordingly. Visit www.worldclimate.com

- 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
- Universal travel adaptor

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- Tour Voucher and a copy of your travel insurance policy, spare passport photos and a photocopy of your passport
- Good walking shoes for sightseeing in the old city of Jerusalem

Optional activities

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 archaeological 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 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 tour guide.

Kosher meals

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

Shopping in Israel

For those that enjoy shopping, when purchasing your souvenirs and bartering for goods set your budget, don't be swayed and remember the caveat – 'let the buyer beware.'

In the tourism industry it's common practice for commission to be offered in exchange for recommending particular shops or suppliers. This can become an issue when clients feel obliged to purchase. We do our best to avoid this by monitoring all shopping experiences offered.

All shopping experiences on your tour have been noted in the itinerary and they been selected based upon positive feedback from travellers. You are under no obligation to partake in a listed shopping experience and you are most welcome to wait inside or outside the premises.

Although we only visit reputable retailers, please note that we cannot explicitly guarantee the quality of their products. All purchases made whilst on holiday with us are at your own discretion. Please make sure that you are completely happy with your purchase. On The Go cannot be held responsible for any items that you buy if they fail to meet expectation, or any shipping arrangements. Proceed with caution.

Culture & dress requirements

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 Israeli's and there are a few situations when this should be kept in mind.

Please visit www.onthegotours.com/Israel/Travel-tips-and-useful-info for local customs, currency, dress requirements, WiFi and other helpful information to prepare you for an enjoyable holiday.

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