



MEJDI TOURS

A Little Bit of Heaven, Hardship, and Hope: Seeing Israel and Palestine with New Eyes With Temple Hillel B'nai Torah and Rabbi Barbara Penzner February 15 -24, 2018

Whether this is your first or tenth visit, take a fresh look at an ancient land with this groundbreaking tour of Israel and the West Bank. With a unique approach that accesses contemporary issues through personal storytelling and relationship-building, the tour features a diverse array of guides and speakers—Israeli and Palestinian, Christian, Jewish, and Muslim, conservative, moderate and progressive. Enjoy the lively cosmopolitan seaside of Tel Aviv, discover quaint towns that dot the hillsides of the Galilee, see firsthand cities, villages and settlements in the West Bank, and connect with the sacred sites of Jerusalem. With time for discussion, fun, and exploration on your own, join us for this once-in-a-lifetime journey that will investigate the complexity of the region, embrace agents of change working for peace, and celebrate the hospitality and vibrant cultures of the local communities.

Day 1, Thursday, February 15, 2018: Arrive [no guide, no bus]

- Arrive at Ben Gurion Airport and make your way to the hotel in Tel Aviv.

Hotel: Gilgal Hotel, Tel Aviv

Day 2, Friday, February 16, 2018: Tel Aviv [1 guide, no bus]

- Walk to Trumpeldor Cemetery for an introduction to the Zionist beginnings of Tel Aviv.
- Visit Beit Ha'ir, the historical Town Hall of Tel Aviv. Beit Ha'ir is part of the Bialik Complex, a center of Hebrew and Israeli culture that comprises a pivotal chapter in the city's history and cultural life.
- Then check out the pre-Shabbat hustle and bustle of the Carmel Shuk Market, meeting vendors, and savoring the best of local produce.
- Enjoy some time to peruse the weekly Nahalat Binyamin Art Market.
- Stop by Meir Park, opened in 1944 and named after the first mayor of Tel Aviv, Meir Dizengoff. Meir Park is home to a prominent city funded gay community center.
- Return to the hotel to prepare for Shabbat.
- Join with Kehilat Halev, Reform synagogue, for services and a Shabbat dinner.

Hotel: Gilgal Hotel, Tel Aviv [B, D]

Day 3, Saturday, February 17, 2018: Tel Aviv and Jaffa [2 guides, no bus]

- Have a free morning to explore the city on your own, attend Shabbat morning services, or sleep in.
- Regroup in the early afternoon and take a walking tour through the Neve Tzedek neighborhood to Tel Aviv's old train station that has been converted into a hip food and shopping complex.
- Continue on foot to Old Jaffa to see the Clock Tower, the Mosque of the Sea, the port area, The Arab-Hebrew Theatre, the Wishing Bridge, and other religious and historical sites also the way. Learn

about Jonah and the Whale, Napoleon, the Jaffa Riots, the British Mandate, and modern coexistence efforts between Jaffa's Jewish and Arab residents.

- Have free time to explore more of Jaffa. Make your way back to the hotel by taxi (not included).
- Reconvene for Havdallah on the beach and an optional cultural activity (not included).

Hotel: Gilgal Hotel, Tel Aviv [B]

Day 4, Sunday, February 18, 2018: Atlit, Ein Hod/Ein Hawd, Jisr az Zirqa, and Nazareth [2 guides, bus]

- Drive up the coast to Atlit. This preserved "illegal" immigrant detention camp tells the story of the struggle of Jews fleeing Europe from Nazi persecution and death, trying to reach British controlled Palestine, only to be incarcerated in camps similar in appearance to the Nazi camps of Europe.
- Continue to the villages of Ein Hod and Ein Hawd. It is one of the approximately 400 Palestinian Arab villages that were evacuated during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. The village of Ein Hawd was renamed Ein Hod and established as a Jewish artist colony, the only artists' village in Israel, and one of few of its kind in the whole world. Meanwhile, several Arabs from the original community returned to the village lands after being released from an Israeli prisoner of war camp, refused to leave the area and settled on the village lands. They established a new village that, after much struggle, eventually got recognized as Ein Hawd. Have lunch with Muhammad Mubarak Abu Alhija, the municipal head of Ein Hawd, at a restaurant in his home call "HaBayit" ("The House") and hear his story. Then return to Ein Hod to see the Jewish artist village of Ein Hod, home to some 150 artists and their families.
- Then, experience the authentic atmosphere and culture of the Israeli Arab fishermen's village of Jisr az Zarqa with local high school students as guides.
- End the day in Nazareth and check into the hotel.
- Have a group dinner at Tishreen.

Hotel: Rimonim Hotel, Nazareth [B, L, D]

Day 5, Monday, February 19, 2018: Nazareth, Haifa, and Daliyat al-Karmel [2 guides, bus]

- Take a walking tour of the Old City of Nazareth, visiting the Basilica of the Annunciation and the White Mosque.
- Then learn about the Arab-Israel hi-tech scene in Nazareth.
- Travel to Haifa and visit the Baha'i Gardens to learn about the Baha'i faith.
- Then stroll through the city's Wadi Nisnas district – a Christian-Arab neighborhood famous for its art route. This "Museum Without Walls" serves as an open art venue that incorporates changing exhibitions and a permanent display of artworks. End at a Jewish-Arab Culture Center and their art gallery dedicated to multiculturalism and dialogue. There, meet a representative of this central hub for Haifa's different national, ethnic, and religious groups.
- Continue to Daliyat al-Karmel, a colorful Druze village high on the slopes of Mt. Carmel, that offers wonderful hospitality. Tour the village, meet locals, and taste an authentic Druze cuisine.

Hotel: Rimonim Hotel, Nazareth [B, D]

Day 6, Tuesday, February 20, 2018: Galilee [2 guides, bus]

- Visit Sindyanna of Galilee's Fair Trade olive groves and beehive honey production in Yafiya. Then continue on to Sindyanna's visitor center in Kfar Manda to meet women involved in producing their high quality Fair Trade crafts. Have lunch there.
- Head north to Sakhnin. See the Sakhnin Spring and learn about the Old Town and the role of the spring in this traditional village. Learn about the town's bloody history during the Second Intifada. And, meet with a soccer player at Duah Stadium to hear how soccer has influenced the village.
- End the day by meeting a representative of Women Waging Peace. Hand deliver contributions to Women Waging Peace's Women's Peace Quilt.
- Return to Nazareth for dinner on your own.

Hotel: Rimonim Hotel, Nazareth [B, L]

Day 7, Wednesday, February 21, 2018: Nahalal, Jerusalem, and Bethlehem [2 guides, bus]

- Volunteer with Leket Israel in Nahalal. Plant or harvest fruits or vegetables for Israel's food bank.
- Ascend to Jerusalem.
- Visit the Jerusalem Hand in Hand bilingual school, part of an educational network throughout Israel that seeks to create a strong and inclusive shared society.
- Head to Checkpoint 300 and cross it by foot with your Palestinian guide. Observe the separation barrier up close from both sides and discuss its intents and impacts.
- Meet your Palestinian host families from the greater Bethlehem area who will welcome you into their homes for dinner and an overnight stay. For those who prefer to stay in a hotel for the night, there is a hotel option.

Hotel: Home Hospitality in the Greater Bethlehem Area with a Hotel Option [B, D]

Day 8, Thursday, February 22, 2018: West Bank [2 guides, bus]

- After breakfast, say goodbye to your host families and come back together.
- Tour Dheisheh refugee camp.
- Have lunch at the Tent of Nations and Dahers' Vineyard and meet the owners, the Nassar family who seek to bring people from all over the world together to build bridges of understanding, connecting people to each other, and to the land to which we all belong.
- Spend the afternoon in Hebron's Old Town where Palestinians and Israeli settlers live adjacent to one another with much friction. Visit the Cave of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs.
- Return to Jerusalem, check into the hotel, and have a debriefing and processing session.
- Enjoy a free evening to explore the Ben Yehudah Street area, Emek Refa'im Street, First Station, or elsewhere in the city.

Hotel: Legacy Hotel, Jerusalem [B, L]

Day 9, Friday, February 23, 2018: Art Tour of Jerusalem [2 guides; likely no bus]

- Do a diverse political art tour of the Musrara neighborhood of Jerusalem and in the Old City. Musrara was built at the end of the nineteenth century, as an Arab aristocratic neighborhood outside the walls of the Old City. It became the seam line between Israeli and Jordanian controlled Jerusalem after the session of fighting in 1948. It is now an up-and-coming neighborhood with a number of art institutions.
- Return to the hotel and prepare for Shabbat.
- Bring in Shabbat with an egalitarian minyan. Have Shabbat dinner together.

Hotel: Legacy Hotel, Jerusalem [B, D]

Day 10: Saturday, February 24, 2018: Shabbat in Jerusalem [no bus, 2 guides]

- Have the morning free with the option of joining Rabbi Penzner for services at a Reform congregation.
- In the afternoon, return to the Old City. Take a tour of the cobbled alleyways of the Old City's Jewish Quarter and see landmarks such as the Roman Cardo and Hurva Synagogue. Visit the Kotel (Western Wall) plaza and learn about the current state of affairs to create an egalitarian section. Continue to the Christian "Stations of the Cross" along the Via Dolorosa and tour the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, identified as the place of both the crucifixion and the tomb of Jesus. Weave through the shops and alleyways of the Arab *shuk* (market).
- End the tour with a group processing session followed by Havdallah.
- Make your way to the airport on your own.

[B]