



Tour: Congregation Ner Shalom's Tour of Israel and the West Bank

Dates: May 4 - 14, 2023 (Optional Post-Tour Extension to Jordan: May 14 - 17, 2023)

Itinerary:

Day 1: Thursday, May 4, 2023 - Arrival

- Upon arrival in Israel, transfer on your own to **Tel Aviv** if you are not on the group flight. A **group transfer** will be provided for everyone on the recommended flight and those arriving around that time.
- Have a **welcome meeting** at your hotel with your **group leaders**.

Hotel: Tel Aviv-Jaffa

Day 2: Friday, May 5 - Tel Aviv

- Have an optional **morning meditations/chanting session**.
- Meet your guide and begin your tour with an opening gathering **outside of the Etzel House**. The Etzel House is dedicated to the pre-state Zionist paramilitary organization, the Irgun. With seaside views of both Jaffa and Tel Aviv, learn the Arab and Jewish histories of these adjoining cities including an explanation of the birth of Tel Aviv and the Zionist movement and the struggles of life in Arab Jaffa and beyond. The building is one of the very few remaining structures from the Arab neighborhood of Manishiya that was in part destroyed during the 1948 battles.
- Briefly hop back onto the bus to travel to the **Nahalat Binyamin Art Market**. Have ample time to stroll and shop.
- Continue by foot to the **Carmel Shuk**. Explore, shop, and eat your way through the market.
- Continue your walking tour of central Tel Aviv by strolling up **Bialik Street**, home to **Rubin Museum**, the former residence of painter Reuven Rubin and **Bialik House**, the former residence of Israel's national poet Chaim Nachman Bialik. Beit Ha'ir, Tel Aviv's former town hall is at the top of the street.
- Conclude the afternoon with a visit to **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. Outside of the center, you can find a monument dedicated to the gay victims of the Holocaust and a garden serving as a memorial to the 2009 shooting spree at a Tel Aviv LGBT youth club.
- Return to the hotel to **prepare for Shabbat**.
- Join with a **Kehilat HaLev** for a **Reform community** for **Shabbat evening services** followed by a Shabbat dinner nearby.

Hotel: Tel Aviv-Jaffa (Breakfast and Dinner included)



Day 3: Saturday, May 6 - Culture and Music in a Shared Society

- Have the option of visiting one of **Tel Aviv's synagogues** for Shabbat morning services, sleep in, or explore the city on your own.
- Have **Shabbat lunch together**.
- In the afternoon take a walking tour through more of **Jaffa** through the lens of music with a member of the multi-ethnic hip hop group **System Ali**. The tour combines the history of the city of Jaffa in its 5,000 years of existence with a discussion of the conflictual issues of the city in recent decades through textual and musical works performed on the site.
- Have a group **Havdalah**, reflection session and a discussion about the itinerary for the next day.
- Have **dinner on your own**.

Hotel: Tel Aviv-Jaffa (Breakfast and Lunch included)

Day 4, Sunday, May 7 - Culinary Experiences and Haifa

- Have an optional **morning meditations/chanting session**.
- Check out after breakfast and travel north.
- On your way to Haifa, enjoy **home hospitality in a Druze village** and **learn to make a Druze dish** before having **lunch together with your host**.
- Continue on to **Haifa**, a fascinating cultural mosaic made up of Jews and Arabs, veterans and newcomers, and Eastern and Western influences.
- Upon reaching the city, visit the **Baha'i Gardens**.
- Explores Haifa's origins as a tolerant cosmopolitan city with diverse cultural treasures and religious traditions. Stroll through the **Museum Without Walls** in the **Wadi Nisnas neighborhood**, a public open-air museum meant to signify unity in a multicultural city and embody the concept of open dialogue between Jewish and Arab culture.
- Complete the day with a meeting with a **local peacebuilding organization**.
- Check into the hotel and have a **group dinner**.
- Have a group **reflection session** and a discussion about the itinerary for the next day.

Hotel: Haifa (Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner included)

Day 5: Monday, May 8 - Tzfat and Jerusalem

- Have an optional **morning meditations/chanting session**.
- Check out after breakfast.



- See the crowds gathering for Lag B'Omer as you pass **Mt. Meron**. Learn about **Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai** (the Rashbi), the Mishnaic-era sage, rebel against Rome, and author of the Zohar and Rabbi Hillel the Elder who are both buried there.
- Walk the narrow stone lanes of the picturesque town of Tzfat (Safed) in Upper Galilee, a center of Kabbalah and one of the four Jewish holy cities. Visit its many synagogues such as the **Abuhav Synagogue**, **Ha-Ari Synagogue**, and **Caro Synagogue**. Learn about historical figures buried in Tzfat including visiting a cemetery and **the Cave of Shem and Ever**, one of the oldest historic sites in Tzfat with significance to Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Tour art galleries including **David Friedman's Kosmic Kabbalah Art gallery** and a **candle shop**.
- Have a workshop with **Yehudit Goldfarb**, a former Bay area T'ai Chi master and spiritual philosopher who created the practice of the **Otiyot Hayyot**. Otiyot Hayyot is a series of gentle, flowing movements based on the shape of the Hebrew letters.
- **Ascend to Jerusalem** and check into the hotel.
- Have **dinner on your own** at the hotel or elsewhere nearby.

Hotel: Jerusalem (Breakfast included)

Day 6: Tuesday, May 9 - A Four Quarter Religion, History, and Art Tour of the Old City of Jerusalem

- Have an optional **morning meditations/chanting session**.
- Enter the **Old City** through the **Dung Gate** and visit the **Kotel (Western Wall)** plaza and learn about the current situation to create an egalitarian section.
- Ascend to the **Temple Mount/Al-Haram al-Sharif** and tour the precinct.
- Have free time for **lunch on your own** in the **Jewish Quarter**.
- Visit the **Museum of Psalms** to participate in a text study of a selection of Psalms through art. The Museum of Psalms features the Psalms Collection, 150 paintings for each of the Psalms created by Moshe Tzvi Halevi Berger, one painting for each one of the Psalms.
- Learn about the **Christian "Stations of the Cross"** along the **Via Dolorosa** and the incense-filled halls of the **Holy Sepulchre Church**, the place identified as both the site of the crucifixion and the tomb of Jesus.
- Weave through the shops and alleyways of the **Arab shuk** (market) in the Old City, where you can have some free time to practice your haggling skills.
- Return to the hotel for a group **reflection session** and a discussion about the itinerary for the next day.
- Go out to dinner near the hotel with **Professor Yofi Tirosh, PhD. Dr. Tirosh**. Dr. Yofi Tirosh is Vice Dean and an Associate Professor at the Tel Aviv University Faculty of Law and the former Dean of the Sapir Academic College School of Law in Israel's south (Negev) region. Her research on antidiscrimination law, feminist jurisprudence, and law and culture has been published in leading international and Israeli journals. Her current research and advocacy work focuses on challenging the growing trend of mandatory sex segregation in Israel.



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- Have a group **reflection session**.

Hotel: Jerusalem (Breakfast and Dinner included)

Day 7: Wednesday, May 10 - The City of David/Silwan and Yad Vashem

- Have an optional **morning meditations/chanting session**.
- Be welcomed to the **City of David/Silwan** area by a Jewish ideological settler who lives in this East Jerusalem neighborhood located just outside of the Old City.
- Tour the **City of David** archaeological site with an archaeologist from the archaeological activist organization **Emek Shaveh**.
- Then have **lunch at a Palestinian community center in Silwan** to hear from Palestinian residents about the impact of the archaeological site and influx of ideological settlers in their neighborhood.
- In the afternoon, pay a sobering visit to **Yad Vashem**, the Israeli Holocaust Museum. Have a **group reflection session** and a discussion of the about the itinerary for the next day.
- Have **dinner on your own** or venture out in clusters to the **Ben Yehuda Street pedestrian area or Machane Yehuda Shuk Market**

Hotel: Jerusalem (Breakfast and Lunch included)

Day 8: Thursday, May 11 - Southern West Bank

- Have an optional **morning meditations/chanting session**.
- Tour the **separation barrier** up close and discuss both its impact on Israelis and Palestinians and the images you see painted on the wall.
- Visit the **Walled Off Hotel**, set up and financed by world renowned Street Artist Banksy, to see their **museum and art gallery**.
- Spend the afternoon in **Hebron's Old Town**. Have lunch together. Then see the **Cave of the Patriarchs** and **Matriarchs**. Walk down Shuahada Street. Visit the Women in Hebron Cooperative shop.
- End the day by meeting **Hadassah Froman**, an Orthodox Jewish peacemaker from the West Bank settlement of Tekoa and involved in the Abrahamic Reunion movement. She was the wife of the late Rabbi Menachem Froman, a pioneer in Jewish-Muslim peacemaking in the West Bank settlements.
- Return to Jerusalem and hear from **two peacemakers**, one Israeli and one Palestinian, from the **Parents Circle/Families Forum**. Both speakers lost close family members in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- Have a **group reflection session** and then **dinner on your own**.

Hotel: Jerusalem (Breakfast and Lunch included)



Day 9: Friday, May 12 - Masada, the Dead Sea and Shabbat

- Travel south to the mountaintop fortress of **Masada**. There, take in breathtaking views of the **Judean Desert**, explore the archaeological park, and learn the dramatic story of Masada's role in the Great Revolt. Have an optional morning meditations/chanting session at Masada.
- Stop at the Dead Sea for your guide to give an **environmental overview** on the area
- Join with a Reform or independent congregation for **Shabbat evening services**.
- Have **Shabbat dinner**.

Hotel: Jerusalem (Breakfast and Dinner included)

Day 10: Saturday, May 13 - Shabbat in Jerusalem

- Have an optional **morning meditations/chanting session**.
- In the morning, visit the **Israel Museum** and the Shrine of the Book, which houses the Dead Sea Scrolls
- Have a **group lunch**.
- Then have a **Shabbat afternoon learning session** with either **Yiscah Smith or Diane Bloomfield**.
 - Yiscah Smith is a transgender woman in her 60s who had previously lived as an ultra-Orthodox Jewish man, with a wife and six children as part of the Chabad Hassidic community in Jerusalem. Yiscah remains an observant Jew and spiritual teacher.
 - Diane Bloomfield is the creator of the Torah Yoga Approach. Diane has spent many years learning and teaching Torah, both in yeshivas and privately. She often gives Divrei Torah at Shabbat services and shiurim in Jerusalem, has taught the Torah Yoga Corner on Israel National Radio, and teaches Torah from Jerusalem online. Her Torah Yoga book is published by Wiley (Jossey-Bass) in both softcover and Kindle formats.
- Have **dinner on your own**.
- Go as a group to the Burnstein Basement Klezmer located in large Yiddish library in the heart of an ultra-Orthodox neighborhood. They begin with Havdallah, serve kugel, and perform live music with comical aspects.
- Return to the hotel.

Hotel: Jerusalem (Breakfast and Lunch included)

Day 11, Sunday, May 14, 2022 - Departure or Jordan Extension Tour

- Convene as a group for a final **morning meditations/chanting session** followed by a **group reflection session**.
- Travelers on the Jordan Extension tour will depart early for the flight to Eilat.
- There will be a group transfer arranged in the evening for those on the recommended group flight.
- Hotel check-out time is 10am.
- Travelers extending their stay do not need to check-out.



Recommended activities for those extending their stay:

Jerusalem:

- Drive to the top of the Mount of Olives and take in the magnificent view. For Jews and Muslims alike, the Mount of Olives is where the gates of heaven will open up on Judgment Day. This is why it is considered an important burial ground in both faith traditions. Along the slope of the hillside a series of important historical churches on the way to the Garden of Gethsemane. According to the gospels, Jesus and his disciples are said to have prayed at the site of the Garden of Gethsemane the night before Jesus's crucifixion.
- Learn more about the First and Second Jewish Temples using virtual reality technology (<https://thekotel.org/en/tours/a-look-into-the-past/>).
- Take a tour of the Western Wall Tunnels (<https://thekotel.org/en/tours/western-wall-tunnels/>). This is the only way to reach the segments of the Wall hidden from view, and to touch the original and special stones that tell the story of the Jewish nation. Visitors to the Western Wall Tunnels walk through ancient and fascinating subterranean spaces with exquisite archeological findings, such as large stone arches, water pits, an ancient water aqueduct that ends at the Strouthion Pool, and more.
- Paint Armenian pottery at Sandrouni Armenian Ceramics (<http://www.sandrouni.com/contactus.html>).
- Visit the Tower of David and return in the evening for the Tower of David Night Spectacular sound and light show (<https://www.tod.org.il/en/event/the-night-spectacular>).
- Tour the Knesset (<https://knesset.gov.il/tour/eng/evisit.htm>) and the Supreme Court (<https://supreme.court.gov.il/sites/en/Pages/home.aspx>).
- Join a graffiti tour downtown Jerusalem and the Nachlaot neighborhood (<https://grafitiyul.co.il/en/calendar-en/?cat-slug=jerusalem-en>).
- Visit the Rockefeller Archeological Museum, situated in a magnificent white limestone edifice in East Jerusalem. The Museum houses the extraordinary collection of antiquities unearthed in excavations conducted in the country mainly during the time of the British Mandate (1919-1948).

Tel Aviv:

- Visit the ANU Museum: The Museum of the Jewish People (formerly known as the Diaspora Museum) (<https://www.anumuseum.org.il/>). The museum presents and displays the unique and ongoing 4,000 year-old story of the Jewish people – past, present and future with a heavy emphasis on culture and religious diversity. Have lunch at the museum.
- Visit the Palmach Museum, covering the Palmach legacy through the stories of individuals and groups. Visitors to the museum join the group of young Palmach recruits from its establishment, and advanced through the story of the Palmach until the end of the War of Independence. The manner of presentation is extremely innovative. There are no displays or documents,



but rather an account of a fascinating personal story accompanied by three-dimensional decor, films and various effects incorporating documentary materials. The visit, which is conducted in groups, correlates with the structure of the presentation, set out as a series of events, and symbolizing the Palmach team spirit. The tour commences and ends in the memorial hall for Palmach warriors who died fighting for establishment of the state of Israel.

- Visit the Yitzhak Rabin Center (<http://www.rabincenter.org.il/Web/En/Default.aspx>), a museum is dedicated to the life of the late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin that serves as a time-thread connecting the faces and events of modern Israeli history.
- Visit the Eretz Israel Museum and Planetarium (<https://www.eretzmuseum.org.il/e/?url=e>). The Eretz Israel Museum is a multidisciplinary museum dealing with local material culture, past and present. The museum displays the connection between matter and spirit, and presents Israel's many and varied voices. The museum's new spirit aims to create contemporary connections between the different cultural domains that the museum is involved with - archaeology, ethnography, applied crafts, art, photography, and documentation of Israeli society - and expand them. There are hundreds of thousands of items in the museum's collection, including many rare and unique treasures. The museum also has a collection of photographs from the history of photography in Israel, including iconic photos. Alongside the permanent displays of the ancient material culture collections, the museum mounts
<http://www.navatehila.org/35897/Concerts%2DPreformances>: Gordon Beach towards the northern end of the beachfront. You can use this App to reserve beach chairs and umbrellas
<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/%D7%97%D7%95%D7%A4%D7%99-%D7%AA%D7%9C-%D7%90%D7%91%D7%99%D7%91-%D7%99%D7%A4%D7%95/id1453849880>. People will come around to take food orders and bring them to you on the beach. If you end up at Gordon Beach, there is a surf school there called Galim: www.galimsurf.com/en/.
- Graffiti tour and workshop in Florentine.
<https://grafitiyul.co.il/en/product/graffiti-tour-and-basic-workshop-in-florentine-tel-aviv>.
- Shuk Bite self guided tour of Levinsky Shuk (<https://en.shuktlv.co.il/category/levinsky-bites>).
- Visit the Peres Center for Peace and Innovation (<https://www.peres-center.org/en/the-organization/about-us/>).