



## 2023 Holy Land Tour - Metro Detroit Community

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June 19 – June 27, 2023

### Itinerary

#### **Day 0: Sunday, June 18 - Travel**

Depart Detroit for Israel.

*Overnight: N/A*

#### **Day 1: Monday, June 19 - Arrival & Introductions (*Guide, Bus*)**

Land in the morning and set out for the coastal plain. From a stunning panoramic viewpoint atop **Tel Gezer**, discuss the Holy Land of today within the context of ancient civilizations, as a crossroads between cultures and continents. Continue to the mixed Jewish-Arab city of **Ramla**, learning of the area's significance in the early Islamic period and its evolution in recent decades. Grab lunch on your own in the bustling marketplace, stand beside the Ottoman clock tower, and paddle through an underground 8<sup>th</sup> century aqueduct. Meet a panel of municipal leaders of different faith backgrounds to discuss their efforts to foster a truly "shared society." Head to **Tel Aviv** in the evening for a group welcome dinner and time to relax.

*Overnight: BY14 Hotel, Tel Aviv [Dinner included]*

#### **Day 2: Tuesday, June 20 - Jaffa/Tel Aviv (*Guide, Bus*)**

Get to know the "White City" of Tel Aviv, where an ancient port was transformed into a high tech metropolis. Walk the **Independence Path** through Neve Tzedek, the Carmel Market and Rothschild Boulevard, understanding the political, architectural and cultural evolution of a city celebrated for innovation. Enjoy *Mizrahi* cuisine for lunch, and learn how various waves of migration brought Jewish communities of distinct cultural heritage to Israel. Walk along the beach promenade in the afternoon,



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passing the Hassan Bek Mosque en route to **Jaffa**. After a brief tour of the Old Town, meet members of a bi-national youth movement working to build a more inclusive city. Explore on your own in the evening.

*Overnight: BY14 Hotel, Tel Aviv [Breakfast and Lunch included]*

### **Day 3: Wednesday, June 21 - Road North (Guide, Bus)**

Depart Tel Aviv and head north to **Caesarea\***, Herod's port city of antiquity, then continue towards the "Triangle Region" of municipalities serving communities of Arab-Palestinian Israeli citizens. Visit with local residents (*organized by members of the group*) and browse works of cultural and political expression at the **Um El Fahem** art gallery. After lunch in town, head to **Nazareth\*** for a visit to the Basilica of Annunciation, then take a boat ride onto the Sea of Galilee at dusk. Arrive at your nearby accommodations for a group dinner.

*\*Alternatively, visit the Bahai Gardens of Haifa and the harbor city of Akko (Acre), including the Al Jazzar Mosque and the Ramchal Synagogue.*

*Overnight: Nof Ginosar [Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included]*

### **Day 4: Thursday, June 22 - Jordan Valley & Judean Desert (Guide, Bus)**

Head south through the **Jordan Valley**, discussing the environmental challenges facing this arid region. Stop in Jericho to visit the remarkable mosaic at Hisham's palace, a remnant of the Umayyad dynasty, and continue to **Ein Gedi** for a stroll through a desert oasis. See the still waters of the **Dead Sea** and ride the cable car to the mountaintop of **Masada**. Explore the site's extensive excavations, which demonstrate the ingenuity of Roman engineering and tell a story of refuge following the destruction of Jerusalem some 2,000 years ago. Ascend next through the Judean hills to Jerusalem, where you'll enjoy a brief orientation to the neighborhood and evening to explore on your own.

*Overnight: Bat Sheva Hotel, Jerusalem [Breakfast and Lunch included]*

### **Day 5: West Jerusalem – Friday, June 23 (Guide, Bus)**

Begin the morning with a visit to **Yad Vashem**, Israel's Holocaust museum and memorial. Consider the place of these tragic events in Jewish memory, and the ongoing struggle to combat hate. Continue to the heart of West Jerusalem for a brief walk through the alleyways of **Nachlaot**, one of the first modern



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Jewish enclaves established beyond walls of Jerusalem's Old City in the late 1800's. Each of these small, interconnected neighborhoods reflects the character of its diverse inhabitants including *Mizrahi* Jews, *Hasidim* and a growing community of students, artists and activists. Enjoy lunch on your own in the famous **Mahane Yehuda** market, then return to your hotel to prepare for Shabbat. Make your way to the Old City, through the courtyards of the Jewish Quarter and onto the Western Wall at sunset to witness a weekly holiday celebration before dinner at your accommodations.

*Overnight: Bat Sheva Hotel, Jerusalem [Breakfast and Dinner included]*

### **Day 6: Saturday, June 24 - Beyond the Walls (2 Guides, Bus)**

Enjoy a relaxed morning, with an optional walk through the nearby **Talbiye** neighborhood or an opportunity to take part in Shabbat worship. Head towards the **Old City** in the afternoon for a tour around its perimeter, shedding light on the significance of those sites within the Ottoman walls through an exploration of what lies just beyond them. Descend from **Mt. Zion** to the **City of David** or Silwan, discussing the complex situation of an Israeli archaeological park embedded within a Palestinian neighborhood. Look east to the Mt. of Olives, discussing the promise of spiritual redemption in comparative religious tradition, and contrast the bustle of the Damascus Gate with the subdued energy of West Jerusalem on the Jewish day of rest. In the evening, meet leaders of different communities whose advocacy for reconciliation is rooted in religious commitment.

*Overnight: Bat Sheva Hotel, Jerusalem [Breakfast, Lunch **or** Dinner included]*

### **Day 7: Sunday, June 25 - The West Bank, or Judea (2 Guides, Bus)**

Stop at the viewpoint on the **Mt. of Olives**, then take Route 60 south from Jerusalem towards Hebron/al Khalil, for a visit to the **Cave of the Patriarchs / Ibrahimi Mosque**, and tour of a city marked by signs of contestation. Process this complex landscape in conversation with your Palestinian and Israeli guides over lunch. Visit the Church of Nativity in **Bethlehem** in the afternoon and peer into the Mosque of Omar across Manger Square. See Rachel's Tomb from both sides of the separation/security barrier, before returning to Jerusalem's Malha neighborhood for dinner with friends of one of your trip leaders.

*Overnight: Bat Sheva Hotel, Jerusalem [Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included]*



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### **Day 8: Monday, June 26 - Ramallah, a Capital (Guide, Bus)**

Set out for Ramallah, *de facto* capital of the Palestinian Authority, stopping at the abandoned **Atarot airport**, a peculiar relic of a Jerusalem since eclipsed by conflict, shifting authorities, and borders. Later, visit the **Arafat Museum** to explore the legacy of a Palestinian leader, and walk through central Manara Square towards an ice creamery celebrated by locals and visitors alike. Depart the city for a neighboring Jewish town/settlement to hear a resident reflect on their attachment to a region called "**Binyamin.**" Return to Jerusalem for the evening, taking time to process as a group, before finding dinner at your leisure.

*Overnight: Bat Sheva Hotel, Jerusalem [Breakfast and Lunch included]*

### **Day 9: Tuesday, June 27 - Conclusions (2 Guides, Bus)**

Your trip culminates with a visit to the **Noble Sanctuary / Temple Mount**, a foundational site in Abrahamic tradition and geo-political flashpoint. Walk the remarkably tranquil grounds beside the Dome of the Rock, reflecting on the site's gravity over centuries and across generations. Continue along the Via Dolorosa through the Muslim and Christian Quarters to the **Church of the Holy Sepulchre**, before departing the Old City via the Jaffa Gate marketplace. Enjoy some free time in the afternoon with an opportunity to shop or visit local museums (Israel Museum, Hebrew Music museum, Museum on the Seam, etc). Convene again for a festive closing dinner in Ein Karem, final reflections on your journey, and transfer to the airport for your departing flights.

*Overnight: N/A [Breakfast and Dinner included]*



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