

ITINERARY: THURSDAY APR. 25- MAY 5, 2013

Day 1: Thursday, April 25: Departure

Board your transatlantic flight for Tel Aviv, Israel

Day 2: Friday, April 26: Tel Aviv

Welcome to Israel! Upon arrival at Ben Gurion Airport, we will be transported to our beautiful hotel along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Next, we'll put on our walking shoes and begin a walking tour of Tel Aviv and Jaffa. From our hotel, we'll walk along Tel Aviv's Mediterranean promenade, where our first stop is **Ha'Tachana**. Originally built in 1892 as the terminus for the Jaffa-Jerusalem railway, Ha'Tachana's collection of refurbished rail cars, freight terminals and train tracks have been renovated into hip boutiques, coffee shops, etc. We'll then make our way to **Neve Tzedek**, the first Jewish neighborhood to be formed outside ancient Jaffa. Finally, we'll arrive in **Jaffa**, the ancient port city where the biblical story of Jonah and the whale took place. Here, we'll welcome the Sabbath with a delicious dinner at a wonderful restaurant as we see the sun set over the Mediterranean Sea. Overnight: **D**

Day 3: Saturday, April 27: The Galilee

Our day begins as we drive along the coastal highway to northern Israel. Our first stop is the beautiful **Baha'i Gardens** in the city of **Haifa**. Next we'll travel to the incredible city of **Acre**, one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world, dating back to the time of the Pharaoh Thutmose III (1504-1450 BCE). It is a city of intrigue where one walks through labyrinthine alleys and streets to explore the remnants of Crusader, Muslim and Ottoman conquerors. From here, we'll continue north to **Rosh Hanikra**. Along with its fascinating history that stretches back to the time of Joshua up until it was a passage point for trade caravans and armies between Lebanon, Syria, Israel, Egypt, and Africa, it is also a beautiful geological formation. The white chalk cliff face opens up into spectacular grottos that are cavernous tunnels formed by sea action on the soft chalk rock. Via cable car, we'll enter the grottoes and explore their beauty.

Finally, we'll head to our hotel, on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Before dinner, we'll gather by the sea and have a special havdalah ceremony, which marks the symbolic end of the Sabbath and ushers in the new week; a ceremony that has been practiced by Jews for thousands of

year. Overnight: **B L D**

Day 4: Sunday, April 28: The Golan Heights

We begin today by traveling to the **Golan Heights**, where we'll visit **Gamla**, which has come to be known as the "Masada of the north." Here, we will begin by viewing the dozens of Griffon Vultures who nest in Gamla's cliffs and then we'll hike down to the ancient city itself. Gamla, a prosperous Jewish town in the Second Temple period, became famous at the beginning of the Great Revolt (67 CE) for its battle against the Romans. We will then visit the reconstructed Talmudic village of **Katrin**, where you will walk the lanes of a real village mentioned in the Talmud, which has come alive again in its actual ancient location. Our next stop is **Tel Faher**, a former Syrian outpost in the Golan Heights that was captured by Israel in the Six-Day War in 1967 and the site of an intense battle between the Israel Defense Forces and the Syrians which ended in the conquest of the outpost by the Golani Brigade. We'll then visit the Golan Heights winery where we'll have the opportunity to sample some of the delicious wine produced her. Next we'll take a wonderful walk at the gorgeous **Banyias Spring** which encompasses the upper Hermon Spring, the Banyias waterfall and a number of archaeological sites, including remains of a Greek temple dedicated to the goat-footed god Pan. We'll then head to a delicious fish restaurant: **B D**

DAY 5: Monday, April 29: The Galilee

Today we will begin by hiking down **Mt. Arbel**, a mountain in The Lower Galilee near Tiberius in Israel, with incredible views of Mount Hermon in the Golan Heights, trails to a cave-fortress, and ruins of an ancient synagogue. Mt. Arbel's cliffs were created as a result of the Jordan Rift Valley and the geological faults that produced the valleys. This morning we will visit **Capernaum**, a fascinating village once inhabited by Jew and early Christian, where we will find a church and synagogue standing side by side as well as many other important archeological findings. Next we will head over to the city of **Nazareth**, described in the New Testament as the childhood home of Jesus. From here we'll take a beautiful walk along the "Jesus Trail" to the ancient city of **Tzipori**, an incredible city which once was once occupied with a mix of Jews, Christians, Pagans and Samaritans. Some of the most incredible mosaics ever discovered can be seen here. We'll next head to **Hamat Gader**, (meaning "hot springs of Gadara") which is located in the Yarmuk River valley, where we will have the opportunity to sooth our bodies in the ancient hot springs, see the archeological remains from the time of the Romans and visit an alligator

farm! Baths were built at Hamat Gader as early as the 2nd century and the mineral waters' curative powers have been famous since ancient times. Among the visitors to the baths during the Roman-Byzantine period were many Jews, and also Jewish sages who made mention of the baths in the Talmud. We'll return to the hotel, freshen up a bit and head to a restaurant in the city of Tiberius.

DAY 6: Tuesday, April 30: On the Way to Jerusalem

Today on our way to the magical city of **Jerusalem**, we'll stop at two incredible archeological parks. The first, **Megiddo**, where archaeologists have unearthed an incredible 25 layers of settlement built on top of each other that cover a period of 35 centuries. It is well known by its Greek name, Armageddon, a place that Christians believe is the site where the end of times will take place. Our next stop is **Bet Shean**, another amazing archeological park in Israel. The Pompeii of Israel, the city of Bet Shean was destroyed by an earthquake in 749 CE. One of the oldest cities in Israel, there are over 20 layers of human civilization tucked away inside its large ancient tell or mound. We'll next visit, **Sahne**, considered to be one of the most beautiful parks in Israel. This magnificent park features springs and natural pools and at its center is a natural spring, which flows at the bottom of a pool, featuring clear water, a constant temperature of 82F waterfalls and stone bridges. Here we'll enjoy a dip in the waters and a fabulous outside grill a la Moshe. Finally, we'll begin our ascent to Jerusalem. Once we approach the city, we'll gather at the top of Mt Scopus, for an incredible panoramic view of the city and for a special celebration in honor of our arrival at the most spiritual place on earth. After freshening up at our hotel, we'll head to see the wonderful **Light and Sound Show** in the Tower of David and then head for a magnificent dinner in one of Jerusalem's delicious restaurants. Overnight: Jerusalem **B D**

DAY 7: Wednesday, May 1: Jerusalem: The Old City

We'll spend today on an incredible journey by foot discovering ancient Jerusalem, beginning from the **Mt. of Olives** for a view of the entire city. We'll then walk down to the **Garden of Gethsemane**, and pass the **Kidron Valley**, finally reaching the **Old City** via the Lion's Gate. We'll walk through the four quarters: Jewish, Muslim, Christian, and Armenian, stopping to visit the important sites in each part, such as the **Church of the Holy Sepulcher** and The **Western Wall**. We'll then head to the **Southern Wall Excavations**, the new **Davidson Center**, the **Robinson Arch**, the **Hulda Gates**, and much more. At the end of the day, we'll have some time to relax before enjoying a night out on the town in Jerusalem. Overnight: Jerusalem **B D**

DAY 8: Thursday, May 2: Jerusalem Seminar & New City of Jerusalem

The dentists will spend the day in the seminar and will join the group towards the end of the day. The rest of the group will begin with a walking tour of the newer neighborhoods of Jerusalem, such as **Yemin Moshe**, **Nachalat Shiva**, the **Russian Compound** and **Mea Shearim**, each with their own fascinating history and flavor. The rest of the group will join us at the end of the day to visit **Yad Vashem**, the Holocaust Museum and then head to the amazing **Western Wall Tunnels**. Last, we'll have a wonderful dinner in the city. Overnight: Jerusalem **B D**

DAY 9: Friday, May 3: Jerusalem: City of David & Dead Sea

We'll get an early start this morning to enjoy a once-in-a-life-time opportunity- exploring the **City of David**. Our tour will include **Dr Mazar's Palace Excavation**, the **Shiloach Pool**, the **Herodian Road**, the recently discovered water channel beneath the road, the **Royal Acropolis**, the underground water system from the time of Abraham, to the Canaanite fortress, and **Hezekiah's Tunnel**. Time permitting, we'll stop at Israel's most famous outdoor market, **Mahane Yehudah**. Finally, we'll say goodbye to Jerusalem and head to our beautiful hotel in the desert sitting on the Dead Sea. We'll celebrate a delicious Shabbat dinner at a special place in a Bedouin-like atmosphere, with delicious food, unique atmosphere and fun! **B D**

DAY 10: Saturday, May 4: Dead Sea & Masada

Today we'll arise early to climb the ancient mountain fortress called **Masada**. After learning about the archeological remains and the stirring account of what happened here, we'll go down by cable cars and head to **Ein Gedi Oasis**, where we'll have the opportunity to do a fun water hike at **Nahal Arugot**. Finally we'll head back to our hotel and spend the rest of the day relaxing by the pool, enjoying the unsinkable waters of the **Dead Sea** or opting for a wonderful spa treatment. Later we'll travel to Abu Ghosh for our farewell dinner and then head to Ben Gurion. **B D**

Day 11: Sunday, May 5: Return to US