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# Explore Israel

for adventurous travelers

**OCT. 30 – NOV. 7, 2017** with optional 1-day  
tour of Petra on Nov. 8



## ITINERARY





## EXPLORE ISRAEL: FOR ADVENTUROUS TRAVELERS

**Oct. 30 – Nov. 7, 2017**

Join the JCC family on a journey of a lifetime to Israel. The trip will include many of the popular sites such as the Western Wall and Masada but will give you a chance to enjoy your passion for the outdoors—walking off the beaten track, cycling, running and hiking while enjoying some of Israel's best food and wine, and celebrating Israel's cultural scene.

**Participants should be able to walk 15,000 steps/5 miles per day. Alternative arrangements will be available for travellers wanting to avoid certain sport activities.**

**Please note:**

Tracks listed in the itinerary require sign up before arriving in Israel and are based on a minimum of 10. Meals or items indicated (\*) in the itinerary are at the participant's own additional expense.

Program is subject to change.

**This trip is open to everyone, you do not have to be a JCC Member to participate.**

**TRIP CHAIR:** Mike Wien, Atlanta Jewish Community Leader, Motivational Speaker, Ironman Triathlete, Professor of Marketing and Franchising.



# ITINERARY

## DAY 1 - WELCOME TO ISRAEL

Monday, Oct. 30

*Welcome to Israel!*

*The group will meet at Ben Gurion airport at 2:00 p.m. to begin our journey south. (We expect that participants will be arriving on different flights and some may arrive earlier than 2:00 p.m.)*

### 2:00 p.m.

Meet at the arrivals hall in Ben Gurion airport. *(We are happy to assist people arriving the night before with hotel arrangements at own additional cost)*

Drive to Tal Shachar, an agricultural village, for brunch/afternoon\* light meal at Shvil Ha Izim (The Goat's Path) dairy restaurant followed by an opening orientation

Enjoy a short hike in the Ella Valley, Shehechyanu (blessing of gratitude) overlooking the Ellah Valley. Drive south to Mitzpe Ramon

### EVENING

Check in to Beresheet Spa resort, Mitzpe Ramon

Dinner at hotel

**Overnight – Beresheet Spa resort Mitzpe Ramon**



## DAY 2 - VISIONS AND VISIONARIES

Tuesday, Oct. 31

*A journey into the Biblical wilderness of the Negev, home of Israel's first Prime Minister*

### MORNING

Visit Sde Boker and the graves of Israel's first Prime Minister David Ben Gurion and his wife Paula.

Depart for a hike at Ein Avdat, a spectacular narrow canyon in the Negev, where water from numerous springs descends into a series of waterfalls. At the top of the climb enjoy a breath taking desert view. *(Hike includes climbing ladders)*

### AFTERNOON

Picnic lunch in the desert

*(Minimum of 10 people per track)*

### TRACK I

Rappelling over Mitzpe Ramon

### TRACK II

Sand boarding-surfing on the Negev sands

### TRACK III

Outdoor Yoga in the desert

### AFTERNOON

Wine tasting and relaxation at the Rujum Winery on the rim of the Ramon Crater

Movement in Motion workshop at Adama with Liat and Nir Ben Gal *(minimum of 10 people)*

-or

Time to enjoy the spa facilities

### EVENING

Dinner at hotel

### NIGHT

Special desert star gazing night activity

**Overnight – Beresheet Spa resort Mitzpe Ramon**



## DAY 3 - STRATEGIES OF JEWISH SURVIVAL, THEN AND NOW

Wednesday, Nov. 1

*Journey to the wilderness to understand the many dimensions of Massada as history and myth and the significance of the Dead Sea area in Jewish history and Israel today*

### MORNING

8:00 a.m.

Check out of hotel

Bike ride from Arad to Massada  
(14 miles on road)  
(Alternative arrangements available for participants who want less physical activity)

Climb Masada by foot up the ramp path for a guided visit to the extensive excavations of Herod's fortress above the Dead Sea, including discussion about Masada as a strategy for Jewish survival

Walk down the mountain via the Snake Path (or cable car)

### AFTERNOON

Lunch and time to relax and enjoy a swim in the Dead Sea at Hod hotel beach at Ein Bokek (you may arrange a massage at own expense)

Enjoy an afternoon hike at Ein Gedi Oasis, one of the most beautiful nature resorts in Israel

### EVENING

Drive to Jerusalem

Check in to Herbert Samuel hotel

\*Dinner on own and a free evening at Jerusalem's Machne Yehuda market / First Station—located at the beginning of Emek Refayim, the original Jerusalem train station that is now a complex of cafes, restaurants, shops, cultural and sport events—to enjoy Jerusalem's bustling night life.

**Overnight – Herbert Samuel hotel  
Jerusalem**



## DAY 4 - JERUSALEM OF GOLD

Thursday, Nov. 2

*The day will focus on the history of Israel and the importance of Jerusalem as central to three religions; explore the Jewish and Christian Quarters of the Old City and excavations adjacent to the Temple Mount; visit remnants of Jewish life from Temple times and examine perennial issues of Jewish life and community*

### MORNING

Optional early morning power walk

“Centrality of Jerusalem for the Major Religions”—guided visit through selected areas of Jerusalem's Old City, the Holy Sepulchre in the Christian Quarter and a guided walk of Jerusalem of the Second Temple period in the Jewish Quarter, including a visit to the Western Wall tunnels

“Jerusalem - Past, Present and Future”, a special introduction to Jerusalem

### AFTERNOON

\*Lunch on own in Old City

3:00 p.m.

Segway tour in the area of Yemin Moshe and the Haas Promenade; overview of Jerusalem's many different dimensions. At own cost (sign up in advance)

### EVENING

ATV night drive in the Judean Desert wilderness, followed by drum circle under the stars and dinner at Canaanite desert restaurant

**Overnight – Herbert Samuel hotel  
Jerusalem**



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## DAY 5 - JOURNEYS THROUGH LAYERS OF MEMORY

Friday, Nov. 3

*A journey through Israel's collective memory—learn how Yitzhak Rabin's assassination and the Holocaust have a significant impact on Israeli society today. Experience a change of pace as the city prepares for Shabbat*

### MORNING

Optional early morning power walk through Jerusalem neighborhoods

Breakfast at hotel

"The Changing Israeli Society – Crisis, Tragedies and Conflict as Change Agents:" special lecture with Dr. Rachel Korazim

Depart for guided visit to the historical museum of the Holocaust at Yad Vashem, including the Avenue of the Righteous of the Nations and a visit to the Children's memorial

Visit Yitzhak Rabin's grave at Mt. Herzl

### AFTERNOON

\*Lunch on own and time for shopping

"Likrat Shabbat – Towards Shabbat," meet as a group for Shabbat candle lighting

### EVENING

Visit the Kotel (Western Wall) to enjoy the Shabbat atmosphere as Shabbat descends upon the city or Kabbalat Shabbat service in local synagogue

Shabbat dinner with lone soldiers serving in the IDF (Israel Defense Forces)

**Overnight – Herbert Samuel hotel  
Jerusalem**



## DAY 6 - SHABBAT SHALOM

(Anniversary of Rabin's assassination in 1995)

Saturday, Nov. 4

*Experience the beauty of Shabbat as a different dimension of Jewish journey – the weekly separation from daily life*

### MORNING

Optional activities (on own):

Free time to join Shabbat services in one of Jerusalem's many synagogues

-or-

Participate in The First Station community outdoor sports activities—morning run, bicycle and jogging paths, TRX straps training facilities, yoga and Tai Chi

-or-

Enjoy a relaxed morning, visit Jerusalem's parks, or spend time with family and friends

-or-

Visit the \*Israel Museum (on own at additional cost)

### 11:00 a.m.

Optional Ramparts guided walk—a unique walking route that offers unusual views of Jerusalem inside and outside the walls, overlooking remnants from the past and

the development of the present

### AFTERNOON

\*Shabbat lunch on own (or can be reserved at the hotel at an additional cost)

"Ultimate Peace"—participate in an ultimate Frisbee program bringing together Jewish and Arab youth through sports

### EVENING

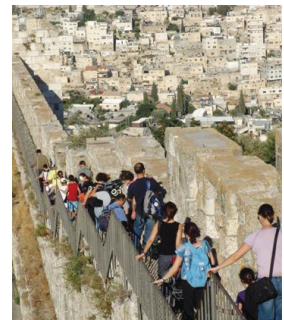
Community Havdallah at the First Train Station (culinary and cultural complex) followed by \*dinner on own

Jerusalem Spectacular sound and light show

-or-

Israeli cultural event at Jerusalem night club (TBD)

**Overnight – Herbert Samuel hotel  
Jerusalem**



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## DAY 7 - TEL AVIV: THE STORIES OF THE FIRST HEBREW CITY

Sunday, Nov. 5

*We will dig through layers of the past before moving on to the First Hebrew City of Tel Aviv*

### MORNING

Check out of hotel

Depart for hike in Beit Guvrin National Park

Participate in an archaeological dig and cave crawling in the ruins of the ancient Roman city located in the park

*(For those uncomfortable with cave crawling an alternative site will be offered)*

### AFTERNOON

\*Lunch on own

Depart for Tel Aviv

Beer tasting in one of Israel's micro breweries

Guided walk through Jaffa, followed by a walking tour to Neve Tzedek, one of the first neighborhoods of Tel Aviv.

### EVENING

Check into Carlton hotel, Tel Aviv

Dinner at Whisky Bar and Museum, Sarona Tel Aviv, or dinner on own and free evening in Tel Aviv

**Overnight – Carlton hotel, Tel Aviv**



## DAY 8 - CONTEMPORARY ISRAEL – MODERN DAY CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Monday, Nov. 6

*A look at some of the challenges facing Israel, including the growing poverty that exists alongside Israel's greatest achievements*

### MORNING

Optional early morning run along the beach

Depart for a volunteer opportunity picking fruit and vegetables at Leket site, Israel's largest food rescue organization. Leket Israel works to alleviate the problem of nutritional insecurity among the growing numbers of Israel's poor.

### AFTERNOON

\*Lunch on own in Rehovot

"Israel in the 21st Century"—visit the Weizmann Institute visitor's center to view interactive exhibits and a multi-media presentation that will give a glimpse into the fascinating world of scientists who uncover the secrets of nature and

decipher the codes of the universe. Learn how the Weizmann Institute is one of the foremost academic institutions in the world

Experience Tel Aviv from up high—a short hot air balloon ride above Yarkon Park in Tel Aviv

### EVENING

Dinner at BlackOut restaurant—a restaurant in the dark

"Through the Spirit"—a performance by the Na La Ga'at Theater company, a unique theater troupe of sight and hearing impaired actors.

**Overnight – Carlton hotel, Tel Aviv**



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## DAY 9 - FULL CIRCLE

Tuesday, Nov. 7

*Explore Israel's first Modern Hebrew city—from its original founding vision by cultural Zionist thinkers to its eclectic present reality. Architecture, and arts are but a taste of today's themes as we follow the development of this "old-new" city that is the cultural capital of Israel. We will sum up our experience in Israel.*

### MORNING

Optional early morning power walk on the beach

Breakfast at hotel

Visit historical Independence Hall and hear the dramatic story of Israel's Declaration of Independence.

### TRACK I

An introduction to Israel through the arts— enjoy a guided tour of the Tel Aviv Art Museum with guest artist

### TRACK II

Visit the Spivak sports center for the disabled, one of the world pioneers in the field of sports rehabilitation

Wrap up and final festive lunch at Tel Aviv restaurant

### AFTERNOON

Check out of hotel

Time for shopping at the Nachlat Binyamin Arts and Crafts open market

-or-

Optional visit to the excavations at Caesarea (*minimum of 7 participants*)

Depart for flight home or optional one-day Petra extension (at additional cost), or arrange for your own vacation extension



## OPTIONAL:

## DAY 10 - ONE-DAY PETRA EXTENSION

Wednesday, Nov. 8

*Petra is an archaeological site in Jordan, lying in a basin among the mountains which form the eastern flank of Wadi Araba, the great valley running from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Aqaba. It is famous for having many stone structures carved into the rock. The long-hidden site was revealed to the Western world in 1812. It is famously described as "a rose-red city half as old as time" and the capital of the Nabataeans.*

### 6:40 a.m.

Flight from Sde Dov to Eilat (Tel Aviv airport)

Cross Israel – Jordan border

Drive to Petra, via Aqaba past Wadi Rum, to the small town of Wadi Moussa/Petra. The entrance to Petra is a walk/hike through Al-Siq, a winding trail at the bottom of a natural deep canyon, at the end of which reveals itself the famous Treasury monument

Lunch at local restaurant.

Exit Petra walking/hiking back through the valley & drive back to Aqaba.

Estimated return at Arava border near Eilat

### 8:55 p.m.

Return flight to Sde Dov airport in Tel Aviv



\*Please note: Meals or items indicated (\*) in the itinerary are at the participant's own additional expense.

## TRIP COSTS

<b>Land cost per person</b> (sharing double room)	\$2,950
<b>Land cost per person</b> (single room)	\$3,905

*The above prices do not include airfare to and from Israel.*

*Costs based on group of 25 minimum*

### **Program cost includes:**

- Hotel accommodations
- Breakfast and one other meal per day
- Program activities and entrance fees
- Tour guide and luxury air conditioned coach bus.
- Basic medical insurance up to 70 years old (70+ at additional cost—see FAQ).
- Tour guide and driver gratuities

### **Note:**

Meals or items indicated (\*) in the itinerary are at the participant's own additional expense.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## Q: When are the dates for the trip?

A: The program begins on Monday, October 30, 2017 in Israel. We will be meeting up at 2pm at Ben Gurion airport. If you arrive in Israel before Monday, we will be happy to help you with your hotel reservations. The trip will end on Tuesday, November 7, 2017 at 3:00 pm.

## Q: How much will the Explore Israel for Adventurous Travelers cost?

A: The trip's land cost, will be US\$2,950 per person sharing a double room. This cost is based on a minimum of 25 participants. The land costs include hotels, half board (breakfast and one other meal each day) tour guide, guest speakers, entrance fees and full educational and recreational programs and gratuities for the driver and tour educator.

If you wish to secure a single room, then the cost is US \$3,905.

In addition you need to add the cost of the airfare to and from Israel.

## Q: What is the minimum number of participants for this trip to be a "go"?

A: The price is based on 25 participants and we are confident that there will be a lot of interest. However, we will evaluate the registration in June to make sure we can continue as planned. We urge you to take travel insurance on your airline ticket as we have no control over cancellation fees for flights. \*If the trip is canceled by JCC Association, JCC Association will reimburse you for the \$250 deposit paid.

## Q: I am thinking of traveling alone without a "significant other" – will that work?

A: Absolutely! We welcome all to join the trip. If you are travelling on your own, you will be able to enjoy the company of other travelers who share some of your interests in the outdoors.

## Q: How do I register?

A: If you are interested in the trip then please send an email to Sara Sless (ssless@jcca.org) in the JCC Israel Center and she will send you a link to the registration site. Participation is based on a first come first served basis.

You will need to register by June 25, 2017.

With your online registration, you will be required to pay a \*non-refundable deposit of \$250 per person. This amount will be deducted from your final payment. Final payment will need to be made by August 15, 2017.

In the event that the trip is cancelled due to insufficient numbers then the \$250 deposit paid will be returned to you.

## Q: Do I need to bring extra money?

A: Yes. You will need spending money for meals on your own, to spend during your free time or to buy gifts. On most days, the program is half board – meaning breakfast plus either lunch or dinner will be provided. You will require money for those additional meals (marked with an \* in the program)

## Q: I am travelling on my own would prefer to have my own room, what is the extra charge?

A: Yes, we do offer single rooms and you are able to specify that on the registration form. You will be responsible for a single room charge of US\$960. If you wish to secure a single room, then the cost for the land costs of the trip is US\$3,910

## Q: I am travelling on my own would prefer to have a roommate, is that possible?

A: We will try to pair you up with others in the same position and will share with you lists of those who are also interested in finding a roommate. However we cannot guarantee you a roommate as this depends on registration for the trip. Therefore you should be prepared to pay for the single supplement should we be unable to find you a roommate.

## Q: Are there extra fees for Israeli citizens?

A: Yes, members of the group who are Israeli, regardless of where they reside, are by law required to pay an additional VAT which is currently at 17%, when staying at hotels and therefore they may be charged VAT by the hotel reception. (Non-Israelis are exempt from paying the value added tax.)

### Q: What are the flight arrangements for the group?

A: You are responsible for arranging your own travel to and from Israel. Plan on arriving in Israel by 2 p.m. on Monday October 30, 2017 and departing after 3:00 pm on Tuesday November 7, 2017.

You may book your flights online, with a local tour operator or through the Amsalem Travel agency with whom we work.

To verify booking through **Amsalem tours** please contact:

#### **Judit Zur**

1307 South Mary Avenue, Suite 203  
Sunnyvale CA 94087  
Direct Phone: (408) 503-6214  
Toll Free Phone: 877 228 8731, ext. 4321  
Fax: (408) 774-9790  
Email: judit@abt-us.com

If you contact Judit at Amsalem, please let her know you are part of a JCC Association group. Generally, the earlier you book the flights, the less expensive they are.

### Q: If I want to arrive earlier, or stay beyond the dates of the program, is this possible?

A: Certainly and if you wish, we can be of help if you want to book extra nights in the hotels and extend your health insurance coverage at your own expense. Please consider the optional Petra add-on. Please contact Sara Sless for these arrangements.

### Q: What about travel insurance?

A: We highly recommend comprehensive travel insurance, including “cancel for any reason” for this trip. The insurance is to cover lost luggage, stolen items etc., or to receive reimbursement for the airfare if you choose to cancel or if the trip is cancelled due to insufficient number of participants or for some other reason. JCC Israel Center will be happy to send you the name of an agent if required.

### Q: Is the medical insurance you provide comprehensive?

A: Closer to the date of the trip, you will be sent a medical form to complete in order for us to arrange health insurance coverage. The medical insurance provides primary care and hospitalization if required. It does NOT cover pre-existing conditions, dental care, eye glasses, pregnancy or drug abuse. There is a small payment (currently about \$3) for each drug prescribed. Participants over the age of 70 will be required to pay an additional supplement for their health care.

### Q: Are all meals provided?

A: The program includes breakfast at the hotel and at least one other meal each day (lunch or dinner). Don't worry though, the tour educator and JCC Association staff will be happy to advise you and point you in the right direction for good places to eat.

### Q: Are all meals kosher?

A: Meals, (both dairy and meat) which are arranged by the program, will all be kosher.

### Q: Will I have time to see family or friends?

A: While this is a pretty busy trip, there are times in the program when you are free to meet up with family or friends, or just hang out with people in the group.

### Q: I have been to Israel many times, what will make this trip special?

A: This is a wonderful opportunity to see Israel from a different perspective. If you like the outdoors – hiking, exploring nature, being active but not rushing from site to site, then this trip is for you! Does an early morning walk along the beach front, or a bicycle instead of a bus, sound enticing? Then this is a trip for you! And it'll be a lot of fun travelling to Israel to all those special sites with like-minded people

### Q: I have never been to Israel—is this the right trip for me?

A: If you love the active life and you love to travel then this trip is for you! You will have an opportunity to see and experience many special things in Israel. The trip will include some of the more traditional sites enjoyed by first time visitors to Israel – such as Masada and the Dead Sea, the Old City of Jerusalem, Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum, Independence Hall and the wonders of the Negev, etc. Inevitably, there isn't time to see everything, but it will be a great start.

### Q: My partner is the outdoors active type, I prefer less strenuous activities. Will this be a problem?

A: You should be able to walk 15,000 steps or about 5 miles a day to participate on this trip. We will try and offer alternative options to the more extreme type activities – however, because we are on the move during the day and when we are in the south we won't be close by to the hotel, it won't always be possible to just relax in the hotel and meet the group later.

The trip will involve quite a bit of walking even if you don't participate in some of the more strenuous activities.

If for example if you don't want to cycle to the beginning of the ramp trail going up to Massada, you can stay on the bus and drive to the cable car station to ride up to Massada to meet the group on the top of the fortress. Feel free to contact Sara Sless with any specific concerns or questions.

### Q: I'm a bit nervous about the security situation in Israel. Should I put off my visit to another time?

A: We are aware that Israel gets more than its share of air space on the international news and media front. We want to assure you however that we will do everything in order to ensure your safety and sense of safety during the program. We have developed an itinerary with your safety in mind. The JCC Israel Center has many years of experience in bringing groups to Israel and offering high quality experiences. The center is in 24/7 contact with the operations room of the Jewish Agency in case of any warnings or emergencies. Having said that, we look forward to welcoming you to enjoy the experience of walking around town centers, sitting in cafes and restaurants and enjoying the buzz of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv as well as the serenity of the Negev.

### Q: What is the Petra day trip?

A: For those who wish to take in the sites of Petra, Jordan, one of the wonders of the world, we have included details about an optional one day extension of the trip to go to Jordan. For those interested it means that you will have to book in for an extra night in Tel Aviv on Tuesday November 7 (at the Carlton, or any hotel of your choice) fly down to Eilat in the early morning of Wednesday, November 8 from Sde Dov - Tel Aviv's small domestic airport (located in the city near the beach.) You will be met at Eilat airport, taken across the border to Jordan. This is a guided bus trip to Petra with quite a bit of walking/hiking through the amazing sites followed by lunch and then back to the airport for return flight to Tel Aviv. (Tel Aviv airport is about 40 minutes drive from Ben Gurion airport).

### Q: How much is the day trip to Petra?

A: The Petra extension is booked through a travel agent who specializes in Jordan travel and will take care of your flight from Tel Aviv to Eilat and return, visa and border crossing fees, guided tour of Petra and lunch. We need a minimum of 6 participants for this extension. 6+ participants \$510 per person

Not included - Tips and drinks, travel and health insurance. Tuesday or Wednesday night accommodation in Tel Aviv (Hotel will be an additional cost. We are happy to arrange this for you)

### Q: What if I want to go to Jordan or stay in Eilat for a couple of days?

A: We will be happy to put you in touch with a travel agent working from Eilat who specialize in Jordan travel, to work out your preferred type of visit, including the possibility of staying in Eilat before you leave for Jordan, staying overnight in a Bedouin tent or 5 star hotel in Aqaba. You can customize and finalize with them and pay them directly for the "add on".

### Q: I have friends who are not part of the JCC, can they join the trip?

A: Sure! We will be happy to welcome them into the JCC family.

### Q: Who is our guide? Who is taking care of us?

A: **Mike Wien** is the trip's chair and head coach! He will be sharing with you his love of Israel and his love of sports and the outdoors. He was a member of the JCC Association of North America Board and marketing committee for eight years. He is 65 years young and an avid sportsman who has competed in triathlons and marathons! He has promised to stick to the group's pace rather than the Ironman pace.

**Amir Rockman** will be your tour educator. He will be with the group at most times and will share with you his passion and love for Israel. Amir was born and raised in Jerusalem in a family of tour guides. When he finished high school he joined the IDF and spent 6 years in the navy as Captain of a small patrol boat based in Haifa and Ashdod. When he was done with his military service, he began his career as a tour guide in Israel. In addition, for six years he worked each summer at a Jewish summer camp in the US, leading a three week cycling and camping trip. For the past few years he has been organizing and leading trips to Israel working with a wide range of clients sharing his love and interest for the country. He lives near the beach in Caesarea, together with his wife Yarden and twin boys.

Amir will be with you out and about but will receive support and back up from the JCC Israel Center.



JCC Association  
of North America

המרכז הישראלי  
JCC Israel Center

**Stephen P. Seiden**, Chair

**Robin Ballin**, Senior Vice President, Program Development

**Leah Garber**, Vice President | Director, JCC Israel Center

**Sara Sless**, Assistant Director, JCC Israel Center | Director, Israel Seminars

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Email Sara Sless at [ssless@jcca.org](mailto:ssless@jcca.org) for more information.

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