



VIP Israel - Classic

Tuesday, February 08, 2011 - Thursday, February 17, 2011

1 Tuesday, February 08, 2011 (VIP & Transfer)

Welcome

WELCOME TO ISRAEL

- Touchdown at **Ben Gurion International Airport**.
- **Before clearing passport control** a VIPISRAEL representative will be waiting to welcome you at the door of your plane as you exit the plane. You will be transported quickly through the airport, pass immigration at the flight crew counter where passport control is efficiently expedited and continue to facilitate luggage identification and handling; & escort you through customs.
- **Ascend to Jerusalem &** Check into your hotel to freshen up and relax.
- Enjoy **dinner** and political update from **Jerusalem Post newspaper Chief Political Correspondent Mr. Gil Hoffman** for an update on the state of Israel and a Q & A session.

OVERNIGHT: Jerusalem, David Citadel

- After breakfast,

Adults:

- Begin your VIP Israel experience at the new **Yad Vashem Museum**. Completed in the spring of 2005, it is a memorial to the six million innocent victims of the Holocaust. Located on **Har Hazikaron**, the Mount of Remembrance, in Jerusalem, Yad Vashem is a vast, sprawling complex of tree-studded walkways leading to museums, exhibits, archives, monuments, sculptures, and memorials. (Children under 10 years of age not permitted entrance).

Children:

- Enjoy a trip to the **Tish Family Zoological Garden (the Biblical Zoo)** in Jerusalem and see animals referred to in the Bible. This modern zoo has the animals roaming freely in enclosures remnant of their natural habitat and not in cages. Located on the slope of one of Jerusalem's mountains, there are numerous corners for visitors to come in close contact with some of the less dangerous animals.
- Learn about the Heroism of the 1967 battle for Jerusalem at **Ammunition Hill**. Once a Jordanian army camp, it became a symbol to the bravery of the Israeli soldiers in the aforementioned battle.
- Enjoy the scenic rolling hills of Jerusalem as you cross the **Ayalon Valley**, a major battlefield throughout history. **The Latrun Police Station** located here was the scene of much bloodshed during the **War of Liberation** in 1948 and was liberated from Jordanian rule in 1967. Visit the Memorial Wall and view a short, moving audio-visual documentary offering a more in-depth explanation of the battles fought here.
- Visit the **Archeological Seminar's "Dig for a Day"** program at **Beit Guvrin**, & uncover actual artifacts as you participate in an ongoing archeological dig at **Tel Maresha**, ancestral home of King Herod. Vast underground labyrinths of man-made rooms are being systematically cleaned and give evidence of underground industrial complexes dating from the Hellenistic period. Remains of olive oil production, weaving installations, water cisterns and baths confirm a high level of material culture.
- Return to Jerusalem for dinner at Red Heifer Restaurant.

OVERNIGHT: Jerusalem, David Citadel

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Thursday, February 10, 2011 (Guide & Vehicle)

Old City

- After breakfast, begin your journey back in time as you visit the amazing **City of King David**. Begin with a breathtaking observation overlooking Biblical Jerusalem and observe 3,800 years of history dating back in time to the days of Abraham, when the first foundations of the city were laid. The journey quickly heads underground to some of the **newest archaeological excavations** at the site. Here, while exploring the recently excavated fortresses and passageways, you will **relive King David's conquest of the Jebusite city** as described in the 2nd Book of Samuel.
- Descend to tour the archaeological discoveries excavated in the **Western Wall Tunnels**. Inside, a most interesting model shows the different dwelling periods and history of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Stand on the site believed to be the nearest spot to the "Holy of Holies".
- Ascending back to the Western Wall Plaza, see the **New Generations Center** where you will find an unusual and enchanting fusion of many creative elements: music, sculpture, archeology and light effects that together create a masterpiece to delight all the senses.
- Walk around the **Jewish Quarter**, reconstructed after the city was unified at the conclusion of the Six-Day War in 1967. A special point of interest in the restored **Jewish Quarter** is the "*Cardo*", meaning the "*heart*" of this ancient Byzantine City. View the unearthed main Roman thoroughfare and ancient marketplace lined with columns.
- Nearby you will also see the **Four Sephardic synagogues** founded in 1588, the oldest of which is known as the "Eliyahu HaNavi" Synagogue- supposedly, according to tradition, Eliyahu the Prophet appeared during Yom Kippur to be the 10th member of a minyan. Ever since a chair has been reserved specifically for his next appearance.
- Have dinner at your choice of one of the many restaurants in the Old City.

OVERNIGHT: Jerusalem, David Citadel

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Friday, February 11, 2011 (Guide & Armored Vehicle)

Chevron

- After breakfast, depart in an armored vehicle and stop for *Tehillim* and supplication at the very special site of **Rachel's Tomb**.
- Learn about the history of the struggle for **Gush Eztion** in a moving multimedia sound a light presentation at **Kfar Etzion**.
- Onto the holy city of **Chevron**, visit *Ma'arat Hamachpela* where our patriarchs and matriarchs are buried: Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov and their wives. Tradition also holds this to be the burial place of 'Adam & Eve.' Meet some of the very special families who live in this special neighborhood & **Rabbi Danni Cohen** the Chabad Rabbi of Chevron.
- Return to **Jerusalem** and enjoy a walk & test your "Israeli bargaining skills" at the **Machne Yehuda Shuk (open market)**.

Towards evening....WELCOME SHABBAT AT THE KOTEL (WESTERN WALL)

- As the sun sets preparations will be made for welcoming the **Shabbat**.
- Upon reaching the steps leading down to the **Kotel**, look around and notice people from all corners of the world converging together with one purpose in mind; to welcome the **Shabbat** at the holiest place on earth. Singing & dancing with true spirit.
- Enjoy **Shabbat Dinner & Chassidic Farbrengen at the Tzemach Tzedek Shul in Jerusalem's Old City**.

OVERNIGHT: Jerusalem, David Citadel

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Saturday, February 12, 2011 (Walking Tour)

Shabbat Shalom

- After a light breakfast, walk to the **Mayanot Shul** for davening or to a synagogue of your choice.
- Return to your hotel for a **Chabad spirited Shabbat lunch, L'Chaim!**
- Take some time to orientate yourself with Jerusalem; spend the afternoon walking the neighborhood streets of **Meah Shearim, Yemin Moshe**, or the **German Colony** to see **Jerusalem's** oldest & most unique neighborhoods.
- As **Shabbat** expires, participate in a moving **Havdallah** service with your Rabbi in the hotel.
- After Shabbat, enjoy shopping and dinner at **Jerusalem's Ben Yehuda outdoor mall**, where the young Jerusalem comes to life.

OVERNIGHT: Jerusalem, David Citadel



- After breakfast, visit the **Science Garden** at the **Weizmann Institute in Rechovot**. Walking around this outdoor “museum”, no one whispers and tiptoes and no one is expected to! The green lawns of the **Clore Garden of Science** are filled with exhibits, large and small.
- The carefully built displays have been designed by **Weizmann Institute** scientists to demonstrate the laws of physics, solar energy, water power and other natural phenomena that we take for granted every day. Not only that, but people of all ages are invited to "please touch" the durable **hands-on exhibits** – twisting, pushing, bouncing and piecing them together.
- Our next stop will be at the **Ayalon Institute Museum**, situated north of the city of **Rechovot**. This was the first clandestine bullet production factory operated by members of the **Hatzofim Aleph, Palmach, and Habonim** pioneer groups during the British Mandate rule. After viewing an audio-visual presentation we will discover the secret entrance to the underground bullet factory, which was so successfully disguised from the British!
- Continuing our history lesson, visit the spectacular **“Palmach Museum”**. Through a modern multi-media presentation, view the history of the **Palmach** from 1941 to the **War of Independence** and the establishment of the **State of Israel**.
- Ascend the **highest observatory in the Middle East** (located on the 49th floor of the Round Building at **Azrieli Center**), where it is possible to see the coastline that stretches from Ashkelon in the south, to Hadera in the north.
- Enjoy dinner at the famous **Papagaio** restaurant in the **Azrieli Center Mall** next door.
- Walk along the **Promenade** which connects the **Old Jaffa Port to Modern Tel Aviv** boardwalk **full of restaurants and clubs**.
- Return to Jerusalem.

OVERNIGHT: Jerusalem, David Citadel

- After breakfast, check out of hotel.
- Depart to the **Dead Sea** region, traveling south through the Judean Wilderness.
- Stop to drive a **Dune Buggy** deep into the Judean Desert!
- Arrive at **Masada** - Ascend the cliff top fortress by cable car, or for the more daring, ascend the snake path just as the Jews did thousands of years ago. Explore the ancient remains of the fortifications, **King Herod's** palace, storerooms and baths.
- Take in the beauty of the natural **Ein Gedi Waterfall**; take a light hike along a waterfall oasis, whose beauty exudes vibrant hues of green, red, blue and yellow, a small slice of heaven. The oldest ruins found in Ein Gedi are from the fourth millennium BCE, when people in Eretz Israel first began to use copper. During the Byzantine period, the Jewish residents of the area built an **ornate synagogue here in Ein Gedi**.
- Continue along **the Dead Sea**, the lowest point on earth, and a rich source of minerals for export. **Take a swim or 'float'** & let the buoyant waters support you as you relax on your back and think of nothing else but the sea all around you.
- Toward the evening, visit **'Eretz Beresheit' / Genesis Land**; to enjoy **camel tour & traditional desert dinner**.
- Return to Jerusalem.

OVERNIGHT: Dead Sea, Isrotel

- After breakfast, travel to the ancient remains of **Beit Shean** – one of the oldest settled sites in the country with excavations dating back to the 5th century BCE. This is where, in biblical times, the bodies of **King Saul and his sons** were nailed to the city walls by the Philistines. There are many highlights to see, including the **1st-century 7,000+ seat amphitheater**, the western bathhouse and the 150-meter long 'Palladius Street'.
- Nearby, go **rafting** down the **Jordan River**. With its many spectacular views, and fast currents, this is one activity not to be missed. *Remember to bring a change of clothing!!!*
- Relax a little, change into new dry clothing and enjoy the drive further north up to the Holy City of **Tzfat**.
- **Tzfat** has much to offer in the way of art galleries, gift-shops and restaurants found tucked away amongst the winding, cobblestone streets and take a dip in the famous **Mikveh of the AriZal** in the mystical city. Visit the **unique synagogues** such as the Ari Sephardi, Ari Ashkenazi, Ari Beit Midrash, Caro Synagogue, Abuhav synagogue (built in 1490) and many more. You may like to stop and say a prayer at the holy burial sites of some of our Great Kabbalistic leaders, such as the AriZal and Rabbi Yosef Cairo (author of the Shulchan Aruch – Code of Jewish Law).
- Of course, we must also drop in to **Tzfat's famous candle shop**.
- Next we ascend to **Mount Canaan**. Overlooking scenic **Tzfat** is the exciting new visitors' center – **Otzar HaStam**. The center, the only one of its kind in the world, opens a window to the fascinating world of "**Stam**" – the ancient art and tradition of the Jewish Scribes, writing Sifrei Torah, Tefillin and Mezuzot.
- **Enjoy Dinner, Farbrengen and evening of events** led by your guide & Rabbi at Ascent of Tzfat with **Live Klezmer Music & entertainment**.

OVERNIGHT: Tiberius

- After a light breakfast, have the very special privilege of being guests of an **Armored Brigade** at their **IDF base**. This is an exclusive VIP experience! (pending military approval).
- Drive to a **shooting range**, a place where some of the secret forces of Israel are trained and we will practice shooting from an automatic **Uzi gun**, or an **AK47 (Kalashnikov)**.
- Onward further north into the Golan to the **City of Katzrin**, which was established in 1977 and was one of the first urban settlements in the **Golan**.
- In **Katzrin**, see a fascinating **audio-visual presentation** describing the history of the **Golan** throughout the ages & tour the ancient reconstructed **Talmudic Village** and a partially restored 1,500-year-old synagogue.
- At the **Golan Magic Welcome Center** in Katzrin, view a **colorful accurate model of the Golan Heights**, one of a kind in Israel. The model uses unique lighting effects that run along the streams, canyons and settlements of the Golan Heights.
- **Go jeeping to the** observation point on **Mount Bental**, an abandoned Israeli bunker overlooking the entire **Golan Heights**. From here you can see the mountains of the **Galilee** and **Lebanon**, and eastward into Syria.
- Here also lies the **Valley of Tears**, where one of the bloodiest battles of the Yom Kippur War was fought.
- Enjoy a cruise on the Kinneret and dinner at Deck's Restaurant.

OVERNIGHT: Tiberius

- After breakfast, check out of hotel.
- We start our day at **Rosh Hanikrah**, the northernmost point on the Mediterranean shore of Israel, where a chalk mountain range meets the sea. Ride from the mountain top down to sea level via **cable car** to explore the Grotto's formed over thousands of years-truly a wonder of creation.
- Arrive in the beautiful harbor city of **Haifa** – The capital of the north and one of **Israel's** main commercial ports. **Haifa** is also proud to be the heart of much of **Israel's** high technology research and industry.
- We will stop at **The Haifa Naval Museum**, which is devoted to the Clandestine Immigration and to the history of the Israeli navy. The ship Af-Al-Pi, which ran the British blockade during the Mandatory period, is on display.
- Visit **Elija's Cave** at the **Carmel**, sacred for all local religions, Jewish, Muslim, Christian & Druze. The walls of the cave are filled with ancient graffiti, including some created by Roman soldiers. Many pilgrims attribute healing powers to the area.
- Our last stop before dinner will be the ancient city of **Caesarea**, built by **Herod the Great** and once the seat of Roman rule. The **Caesarea National Park** contains an impressive **Roman Amphitheatre**, the **Hippodrome**, a horse-racing arena that could seat 20,000; also a giant headless statue on **Byzantine Street & Mansion**, and the **Roman Aqueducts**.
- Reminisce and exchange farewells at Dinner at the **Meat and Wine Co.** in Herzliyah.
- **Transfer to Ben Gurion Airport** for the departure flight home where you will be met by a VIPISRAEL representative will be waiting to assist you in your temporary departure from Israel.

Begin planning your next VIPIsrael adventure!!!!