



# VIP Israel – Pilgrim Tour

Sunday, July 31, 2011 - Thursday, August 11, 2011

**1** Sunday, July 31, 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.
- **Transfer to Jerusalem &** Check into your hotel to freshen up and relax.

OVERNIGHT: Jerusalem

## 2

Monday, August 01, 2011 (Guide & Vehicle)

Old City

- After breakfast, we'll begin our day by entering the Old City from the Jaffa Gate
- Walk through the Muslim Quarter and view the Dome of the Rock – Haram esh-Sharif.
- Visit the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.
- Enter the Jewish Quarter walk along the excavated Cardo once a main street of Byzantine Jerusalem – now a shopping arcade.
- Walk thru the narrow alleys of the Via Dolorosa thru Souk covered streets.
- Tour the Herodian Mansions, a complex of villas from 2000 years ago.
- Arrive at the Western Wall where you may pray and put a note between its holy rocks.
- Experience 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.

OVERNIGHT: Jerusalem

- After Breakfast, ascend to **Mount Zion** overlooking into the Old city of Jerusalem
- Visit to the **Dormition Abbey**, the traditional Upper Room and the **Tomb of King David**.
- Next, drop in at the **Church of all Nations** (Gethsemane) where the garden of Gethsemane is one of the sacred places dearest to Christian tradition. The fact that it is still rich today in olive trees hundreds of years old, twisted and gnarled, has confirmed the belief that these may be the very same olive trees that witnessed Jesus' last night before his arrest.
- Experience the splendor of the **Garden Tomb**, believed by many to be the garden and sepulcher of Joseph of Arimathea, and therefore a possible site of the resurrection of Jesus. The Garden Tomb is a quiet place preserved for worship and reflection.
- Visit the **Church of the Visitation** which stands high up on the hillside of **Ein Kerem**, from here there is a wonderful view of the valley and the surrounding wooded hills.
- Enjoy lunch at one of the many unique café's in Ein Kerem.
- On to the new **Yad Vashem Museum**. 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. Completed in the spring of 2005, it is a memorial to the six million innocent victims of the Holocaust.
- Evening at leisure in Jerusalem.

OVERNIGHT: Jerusalem

# 4

Wednesday, August 03, 2011 (Guide & Vehicle)

Dead Sea

- After breakfast, depart to the Dead Sea area traveling south through the Judean Wilderness.
- 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 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!
- Stop at the **Qumran National Park**, made famous as the place where the Dead Scrolls were found in 1947. Qumran was built in 150BCE and destroyed by the Romans in 70AD; its stonework is still well preserved (TP).
- Next, drive **Dune Buggies** deep into the Judean Desert!
- Toward the evening, visit **'Eretz Beresheit' / Genesis Land**; to enjoy camel tour & traditional desert dinner.

OVERNIGHT: Jerusalem

## 5

Thursday, August 04, 2011 (Guide & Vehicle)

Tel Aviv

- After breakfast, head to **Tel-Aviv** to the **Azrieli** Observatory which is located on the 49th floor of one of Israel's highest building. The observatory offers a 3D film on Tel-Aviv, an audio guide describing major landmarks, a gift shop, restaurant and temporary art exhibitions.
- Enjoy the rest of the day Roaming Tel Aviv's Business District, magnificent beaches and Exquisite Restaurants.
- Return to Jerusalem.

OVERNIGHT: Jerusalem

## 6

Friday, August 05, 2011 (Transfer)

Jordan

- Pick up from your hotel at 7:30am.
- Arriving at the border crossing we enter the Kingdom of Jordan, from here a 2 hour drive takes us to the **'Lost City of Petra'**. An absolute must for all visitors to the region.
- Enjoy a touring day in Jordan.

OVERNIGHT: Jordan

## 7

Saturday, August 06, 2011 (Free Day)

Jordan

- Jordan!!!!

OVERNIGHT: Jordan

- Check out of hotel and travel to the border.
- A car will be waiting for you by the border coming back from Jordan.
- Drive further north into the **Golan** to the City of **Katzrin**. Established in 1977 it 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.
- Enjoy wine tasting at a **Golan Heights winery**.
- A detour to the slope that looks like a camel's hump, upon which **Gamla** – the Masada of the north – is situated. View the remains of the fortified village, which stood fast against the Romans and was an example to the Jewish nation of the time. At this battle, 5000 people died fighting the Romans.
- 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 an evening cruise followed by dinner at the **Deck's Restaurant** in Tiberius.
- Check into your hotel.

OVERNIGHT: Tiberius

## 9

Monday, August 08, 2011 (Guide & Vehicle)

Tzfat

- After breakfast, visit **Tzfat's** restored Old City including the artists' colony. Tzfat has much to offer in the way of art galleries, gift-shops and restaurants found tucked away amongst the winding, cobblestone streets in the mystical city.
- Stop by Tzfat's famous candle shop and visit art and sculpture galleries.
- Go **Kayaking** in Kfar Blum on the Jordan River!
- Visit **Tel Facher**, and underground Syrian base, then continue onto the **Banias Spring** which begins at the foot of Mount Hermon. This is a wonderful nature reserve; prepare to get a little wet!!!
- Return to Tiberius.

OVERNIGHT: Tiberius

## 10

Thursday, August 11, 2011 (Guide & Vehicle)

Center

- After breakfast, have the very special privilege of being guests of an **Armored Brigade** at their IDF base. This is an exclusive VIP experience!
- 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, an AK47 (Kalashnikov).
- Drive through the "**Plain of Armageddon**" to the town of Nazareth to visit the Basilica of the Annunciation, Mary's Well and the Church of St. Gabriel. Visit the Blessed Cave, view Mary and Joseph's house.
- Visit **Gan Guru Australian Park** in Nir David (Between Tziporri & Bet Shean). This is one of the few places outside of Australia which hosts pet-able Koalas and Kangaroos. This park also includes a 1,500 square meter garden/landscape maze!
- Relax in the natural pools at **Gan Hashlosa** and rejuvenate in the natural Jacuzzi that occurs underneath the flowing stream of an invigorating waterfall.
- The warm waters of the Amal River flow through the length of the park and can be enjoyed year round temperatures in the 80's°F. A fantastic place to relax and re-charge for the remainder of your trip (IP).
- Next, onto **Tel Megiddo** located in the Jezreel Valley. One of the first national parks in the State of Israel, it contains the remains of historic Megiddo, a fortified city that rested strategically on the ancient main road from Egypt to Syria and Mesopotamia, it is one of the most dramatic excavations in the count.

OVERNIGHT: Tiberius

- After breakfast, check out of your hotel.
- Tour the ancient, magnificently excavated city of **Tzipori**, home to Rabbi Judah the Prophet, author of the Mishna. This city did not participate in the rebellion against the Romans, and hence was not destroyed. See an ancient theatre and a villa with a beautiful mosaic floor and other finds from the time of the Mishna.
- Walk through the amazing ancient conduit, which brought water to the city.
- Visit a 4,500 seat Roman theatre, the Nile Mosaic building, and the giant Underground waterworks.
- When **Yehiam kibbutz** was settled in 1946, its original residents lived in the fortress ruins.
- The massive walls protected them when they were under siege during the **1948 War of Independence**. These defense positions have since been restored and are now on view. The top of the fortress affords a panoramic view of the western Galilee.
- Visit **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.
- Driving through oriental city of **Akko** (Acre), where the Christian Crusaders built their most important port. We visit the Templers "**Knights Halls**" under the oriental market with its colors and scents of the East.
- Along the route, you will be exposed to the various civilizations which ruled the city, including the Romans, Byzantines, Arabs and Crusaders.
- Visit the **Stella Maris Carmelite Monastery**, and view the beautiful Baha'i gardens.

OVERNIGHT: Haifa



- After breakfast, check out of the hotel.
- Travel to 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 Ampitheatre**, the **Hippodrome**, a horse-racing arena that could seat 20,000; also a giant headless statue on **Byzantine Street & Mansion**, and the **Roman Aqueducts**.
- The **Time Tower** combines 3-D imaging technology with the local structures to bring history 'truly' to life.
- Drive to **Jaffa**, one of the oldest biblical cities in the world and an important seaport since antiquity. It was from there that Jonah embarked for Tarshish and was swallowed by a great whale.
- Stop at the **Gate of Hope Monument**, which is located on a high plateau and provides a spectacular view of the Tel Aviv coastline and beyond.
- On to view the **White City of Tel Aviv**, whose outstanding architecture blends the various trends of the Modern Movement and town planning in the early part of the 20th century.
- 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.
- **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!!!!*

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