



MEJDI TOURS

Itinerary:

Day 1, Fri Jun 5: Arrival. (One Guide, Bus Transfer to Hotel)

Arrive at Ben Gurion airport, meet your guide, and transfer to hotel. Overview program with guide at dinner and enjoy a free evening to catch your breath and stretch your legs. If time permits based on arrival time, be sure to see the sunset over the Mediterranean from one of Tel Aviv's beautiful beaches.

Hotel: Ruth Daniel, Jaffa-Tel Aviv. (Meal: Dinner Included)

Day 2, Sat Jun 6: Annunciation in First Century Context (One Guide, Bus)

Begin your journey by traveling the Mediterranean coast to Herod's port city of Caesarea Maritima, seat of government of Pontius Pilate. Here, discuss the influence of Rome on the region in the First Century, and then continue to explore the religious complexities of Jesus' day as you travel through Megiddo (Armageddon) and alongside Sepphoris to Jesus' boyhood town of Nazareth where you'll tour Nazareth Village, a re-creation of small-town life in the Galilee of Biblical times. Continue to Mary's Well, and the Church of the Annunciation to consider the message of the Annunciation, and how it likely sounded to Mary in her context. Enjoy a special dinner in Nazareth, and take time for reflection atop Mt Precipice for reflection on Jesus' words about prophets in their hometowns before heading to your hotel by the Sea of Galilee.

Hotel: Nof Ginosar, Galilee. Check-in at 8:30 pm (Meals: Breakfast, Dinner Included)

Day 3, Sun Jun 7: Jesus' Ministry around the Galilee (One Guide, Bus)

In the lush Galilee, explore the role of Capernaum, a city along a route for many travelers of various cultures in the First Century, and center of Jesus' ministry. Stop at Tabgha, the site associated with Jesus' multiplication of the loaves and fish, and at the site associated with Jesus' call to Peter. Recall the Sermon on the Mount at the Mount of Beatitudes. Enjoy the pilgrims' tradition of a Saint Peter's fish lunch while overlooking Galilee before visiting the Jesus Boat Museum to view a First Century fishing boat recovered by scientists, and worship on your group's private boat on the Galilee.

Hotel: Nof Ginosar, Galilee. (Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner Included)

Day 4, Mon Jun 8: Jesus' Journey to Jerusalem (One Guide, Bus)

On Sunday, head south through the Jordan Valley and Samaria, a pilgrimage Jesus would have made repeatedly for Jewish holy days in Jerusalem. Stop at the Jordan River to recall Jesus' baptism, and to consider the prophetic role of John the Baptist. Enter Jericho to ride the cable car up the Mount of Temptation, where pilgrims mark the temptation of Christ, and walk the ruins at Qumran - the site where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, and home to the ancient Essene community. Float in the mineral-rich Dead Sea before ascending to Jerusalem.

Hotel: Grand Court Hotel Jerusalem. (Meals: Breakfast, Dinner Included)

Day 5, Tue Jun 9: Jerusalem, Yesterday and Today (Two Guides, Bus)

On Monday, your group will be joined by a second guide, giving you the rare opportunity to hear a Jewish/Israeli guide in conversation with an Arab/Palestinian guide for the most contested areas of the Holy Land. Overlook Jerusalem from one of its peaks, and pass through contested neighborhoods to discuss their ancient significance and interreligious issues today. Enter the excavation of the Southern Steps, which Jesus and other First Century Jewish pilgrims likely used to ascend to the Temple. Visit the Temple Mount / Noble Sanctuary, site of today's Al Aqsa Mosque and Dome of the Rock. Learn the profound significance of this location, both to Jews and Muslims, including a discussion with an imam. Experience a time of prayer at the Western Wall, site of Jewish pilgrimage for centuries, and end this special day with a dinner and discussion with a local rabbi.

Hotel: Grand Court Hotel Jerusalem. (Meals: Breakfast, Dinner Included)

Day 6, Wed Jun 10: Bethlehem, Yesterday and Today (Two Guides, Bus)

Continue the dual narrative approach as you ride along the "Green Line" from Jerusalem to nearby Bethlehem. Along the way, your guides discuss ancient and modern history, including current issues such as the Separation Wall, inter-group violence, and Palestinian refugee camps. From Herod's hilltop fortress of Herodium, look out toward Tekoa, home of the Prophet Amos. Reflect on the figure of Amos there, and discuss the present issue of Israeli settlements in the area, and the deep connection of both Palestinians and Jews to these lands. Visit Shepherd's Field and enjoy a traditional Palestinian meal at the Bedouin-inspired Tent Restaurant. Visit with a local Palestinian theologian to discuss the situation for Christians in the region and Palestinian theological responses. Visit the Nativity Church, one of the oldest churches in the world, and site where Christians recall the birth of the Prince of Peace in the humble form of a child in a manger. Ask final questions of your two guides in dialogue before bidding one of them farewell.

Hotel: Grand Court Hotel Jerusalem. (Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner Included)

Day 7, Thr Jun 11: Way of Christ (One Guide, Bus)

After two days of learning about some of the most contested issues of today, step back into the footsteps of Jesus. Start atop the Mount of Olives, and descend, making a stop at Dominus Flavit - "The Lord Wept" - a wonderful site to say a prayer over today's city while remembering Jesus' tears over its divisions in his day. Continue down the Mount of Olives to the Garden of Gethsemane, and see centuries-old olive trees, including some that were likely alive during Jesus' lifetime. From the Garden of Gethsemane, climb Mount Zion to the Church of St. Peter in Gallicantu, recalling Peter's denial of Jesus, and then travel through the Armenian and Christian quarters of the Old City to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the final site of Christian pilgrimage for centuries. Finish the day with a time of devotion with your group in the tranquility of the gardens at the nearby Garden Tomb.

Hotel: Grand Court Hotel Jerusalem. (Meals: Breakfast, Dinner Included)

Day 8, Fri Jun 12: Morning of Hope (One Guide, Bus)

In the morning, head west of Jerusalem and hear about various sites proposed as possible locations of the Biblical Emmaus, where the Gospels tell of Jesus appearing once again to the disciples in the breaking of the bread. Visit the village of Neve Shalom / Wahat al Salaam (Oasis of Peace), an intentional village of coexistence between Jews and Arabs, and meet with one of its residents to learn about its special story and hopeful vision. Then share a time of prayer together from Neve Shalom Wahat al Salaam, with one of the sites proposed to be the Biblical Emmaus within sight in the distance, followed by a final group lunch in Abu Gosh, famous for its hummus. Return to Jerusalem with a bit of free time for any last stops you want to make on your own.

Hotel: Grand Court Hotel Jerusalem. (Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner Included)

Day 9, Sat Jun 13: Departure (Breakfast, Transfer, No Guide)

Transfer to Airport for Departure.

No Hotel. (Meals: Breakfast Included)