



Ancient Israel

Classic Tour | 10 Days | Physical Level 1

Tel Aviv – Caesarea – Tiberias Sea of Galilee – Capernaum – Mount of Beatitudes – Safed – Qasar El Yahud – Jericho – Dead Sea – Kibbutz Kalia – Bethlehem – Jerusalem- Mount Zion - Josephat Valley – Garden of Gethsemane

Our extensive tour of the Holy Land takes you through some of Israel's most famous cities and sites. Begin in cosmopolitan Tel Aviv, home to the bustling Mediterranean port district of Jaffa. Visit Roman ruins and mountain villages en route to the Sea of Galilee. Learn of the mystery surrounding the Dead Sea Scrolls before a cable car journey to Masada Fortress for panoramic views across the land. Stop in Bethlehem before a triumphant end to your tour in illustrious Jerusalem.

- Discover Jaffa, a fascinating historical district of vibrant Tel Aviv
- Tour the Roman ruins of Caesarea
- Stay by the sleepy Sea of Galilee
- Take a cable car up to magnificent Masada Fortress
- Explore Jerusalem, New and Old
- Enjoy authentic Shabbat dinner experience



Ancient Israel Tour Inclusions:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a 'land only' option is selected)
- All accommodation
- All meals
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English-speaking National Escort (if your group is 10 or more passengers)
- Visa fees for Australian passport holders
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides

The only things you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, tipping, early check-in or late check-out and other items not specified on the itinerary.

Classic Tours:

These tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures of the Middle East on an excellent value group tour travelling with like-minded people. The tours are on a fully inclusive basis so you will travel with the assurance that all your arrangements are taken care of. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escort and local guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

Physical Level 1:

All our tours feature a physical rating to help you select the right holiday for you. To travel on any of our tours requires unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sights.

'Ancient Israel' is rated 1 on the physical level scale. A reasonable level of fitness is required but it's more about spending time on your feet rather than covering large distances. You'll be getting on and off coaches and boats, walking around the sights and climbing some steps.

Of course, our National Escorts and local guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary. If you require any more information about the pace of our tours, please contact our reservations team who will be happy to answer your questions.

Country Profile: Israel

Israel, the Holy Land to many, is a country of astounding antiquity, deep spirituality and striking contrast.

Its heart and soul is ancient Jerusalem, a city that has played a pivotal role in thousands of years worth of history. Below a skyline sculpted by the architecture of the Muslims, Christians and Jews that covert it as a holy place, you'll discover bustling streets where cultures converge, something that is particularly well demonstrated by the city's fantastic food scene.

Outside the city, Israel has plenty of astounding sights and relics – there's the cosmopolitan seaside resort of Tel Aviv, sacred Bethlehem and the ancient port of Jaffa, to name a few, as well as famous natural wonders such as the Dead Sea.

Whatever you look for in a holiday, from cultural to cuisine and adventure to relaxation, Israel is a magical destination to explore.

Joining Your Tour

The tour is 10 days in duration including international flights. Please note due to flight schedules passengers may arrive/depart on Day 2.

Travellers booked on 'Land Only, the price includes your arrival/ departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to reservations. Join the tour on Day 2 in Tel Aviv and end the tour on Day 9 in Jerusalem. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

Itinerary Changes

It is our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate. In these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements maintaining the integrity of your trip.

Itinerary – Ancient Israel

Days 1-2: Fly to Tel Aviv

Fly to Tel Aviv, arriving the following day. On arrival, transfer to your hotel with the remainder of the day at leisure.

Destination Information

Tel Aviv - This trendy Mediterranean port city is both ancient and cosmopolitan, boasting famous architecture, endless beaches, world-class cuisine and a collection of UNESCO-recognised buildings. There are many districts that make up Tel Aviv, including historic Jaffa, which you will visit on day 2.

Days 3: Tel Aviv

Explore the Jaffa district of Tel Aviv which contains the world's oldest active harbour. According to legend, Jonah reputedly stepped ashore here from the whale's mouth and Perseus circled the harbour atop of Pegasus, his winged horse. Continue to Caesarea to view the fascinating Roman ruins.

After, visit the Druze Villages on the slopes of Mount Carmel. Visit the street bazaars and interact with the community before a local lunch. Drive to Mukhraga for a wonderful view of the Holy Land followed by a short visit to the Carmelite Monastery of St Elijah. Finish the day in Tiberias, on the shores of the famous Sea of Galilee.



Destination Information

Caesarea - This ancient Phoenician settlement was once ruled by King Herod the Great, under the patronage of the Roman Empire. Renamed to Caesarea after the Emperor Augustus Caesar, this city became the capital of the Roman province of Judaea and was also an important centre of Christianity. Caesarea is best known however for its harbour, after excavations in the 1970's and 1980's helped it claim international attention as a marvel of the ancient world.

Tiberias - Built by Herod Antipas, son of King Herod the Great, the city was built during the 1st century BC and in similar fashion to Caesarea, was given its current name in tribute to the Roman Emperor Tiberius Caesar. Rich in archaeological remains, the 'City of Water' is known as one of Israel's four holy cities and 2,000 years was the last sea of the Sanhedrin (Supreme Court of Jewish law).

Days 4: Sea of Galilee – Tabgha – Capernaum – Mount of Beatitudes - Safed

Drive from Tiberias to Tabgha, the sites of the miracle of the Loaves and Fishes. Head to Capernaum to visit the Ancient Synagogue and House of St Peter.

Continue to the Mount of Beatitudes where the Sermon on the Mount took place, followed by a stop at Safed, a hilltop town with a rich heritage of Jewish mysticism.

Return to Tiberias this afternoon.



Destination Information

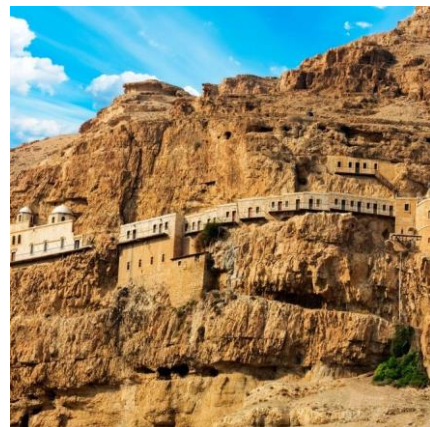
Tabgha - Apart from its bible miracle, this small area on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee has been known as a fishing hotspot for thousands of years. The nearby springs produce water that is warmer than the neighbouring sea which promotes algae growth, bringing many fish to the area.

Safed - This small town is known for its charming network of winding cobblestone alleys that is home to artists' galleries, medieval synagogues and guesthouses.

Days 5: Kibbutz – Qasar El Yahud – Quarantal Monastery – Dead Sea

Head to Kibbutz Degania B, Israel's first Kibbutz. Tour the community and learn about the founding of the movement and its development from one of its members. After, drive through the scenic Jordan Valley to Qasar El Yahud - the original site of Jesus' baptism.

Continue to Jericho for your cable car journey (both ways) to the Quarantal Monastery on the Mount of Temptations, followed by a drive to the Dead Sea to float in the mineral-rich waters. After some leisure time, continue to Kibbutz Kalia where you spend the night.



Destination Information

Kibbutz Kalia B - One of Israel's many kibbutz, these are agricultural places of work where workers live together and share duties and income.

Dead Sea - This landlocked salt lake is located in the Jordan Rift Valley and sits on the border between Jordan and Israel. At 304 metres deep, rain and surface water flows into the Dead Sea but apart from evaporation, the water has no escape. The continuous evaporation in combination with the high salt content means that for over 65,000 years, the salinity levels of the Dead Sea have been ever increasing. Many travellers come to bathe in these unique waters and the high salt content and mineral-rich mud are said to bring many health benefits

Days 6: Masada – Qumran - Bethlehem



After breakfast, travel to Masada where you will ascend by cable car (both ways) to the top of Masada Fortress, where apart from the wonderful view, you will learn of the last stand by Jewish rebels against the Romans.

Enjoy lunch followed by a visit to Qumran, famous for being the area where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered.

Following your fortress visit, you will continue your journey to Bethlehem for a 1- night stay. Enjoy a Palestinian dancing show during dinner this evening.

Destination Information

Masada Fortress - One of Israel's most popular tourist sites, Masada Fortress sits atop a high cliff face that overlooks the Dead Sea. Constructed by King Herod the Great between 37-31 BC, a century later, Jewish rebels defeated the Roman garrison here. In response, the Roman governor Flavius Silva sent the Tenth Legion to take back the fortress. Knowing that the defenders had no response to the Romans' superior artillery, Elazar ben Yair, the rebel leader, ordered the defenders to commit suicide. Thus the rebels wrote themselves into history.

Qumran - Situated between Jerusalem and the beaches of the Dead Sea, Qumran was established during the 2nd-century BC by the Essenes Jewish sect, a religious group who shunned city life and instead settled here, creating a monastic-like community. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls by Bedouins in 1947 (changing hands many times before falling into the hands of scholars) shed light on the ways and beliefs of this mysterious community.

Bethlehem - An important religious centre to Judaism, Christianity and Islam, Bethlehem is known as the fabled birthplace of Jesus Christ

Days 7: Bethlehem – Jerusalem – Mount of Olives

This morning visit the Church of Nativity in Bethlehem before proceeding to Mount Zion to visit the Cenacle (the room of the Last Supper), King David's Tomb and the Dormition Abbey.

After lunch, drive to the Mount of Olives to enjoy spectacular views of Jerusalem. Step back in time as you visit the Pater Noster Church and the Church of Ascension, followed by a descent into Josaphat Valley to the Garden of Gethsemane and the Church of All Nations.

Round off the day as you venture into Western Jerusalem to visit the Hebrew University, Parliament House and the Supreme Court. Enjoy a 2-night stay in Jerusalem.



To book call **1300 727 998** or visit your local travel agent

Visit wendywutours.com.au

Please note that there is a lot of walking today, though the walking will be at a leisurely pace. Do watch your footing whilst walking down the Mount of Olives as the pathway here is steep and ensure you are wearing sensible footwear.

Destination Information

Jerusalem - Considered by many to be the world's most holy city, Jerusalem has been an object of desire for Christian, Muslim, and Jewish people for centuries. Its sacred old town in eastern Jerusalem is alive with atmosphere, and the Western Wall and the famous Dome of the Rock are found here. Western Jerusalem is more contemporary in architecture and is home to an array of excellent restaurants and bustling markets offering fresh local produce.

Mount of Olives - A fabulous viewpoint over Jerusalem's Old City, the Mount of Olives rises more than 800 metres above Jerusalem and takes its name from the endless olive groves that once covered the land.

Garden of Gethsemane - At the foothills of the Mount of Olives, the Garden of Gethsemane (translates to 'olive oil press') has eight olive trees spread throughout the garden.

Days 8: Jerusalem



On your tour of Jerusalem today, you will begin by driving to Dung Gate to visit Temple Mount, where you will find Dome of the Rock and Al Aksa Mosque. After, you will continue to the famous Western Wall, an iconic site in the Holy Land.

Next, enter Jerusalem's Western Wall Tunnels to view the original stonework from King Herod the Great. Then, walk to the Stations of the Cross to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Round off the day with an authentic Shabbat dinner experience, hosted and prepared by a local Rabbi. This fascinating experience will really help you to gain an understanding of Jerusalem's orthodox Jewish community and gain an insight into their lives.

Please note that there is a lot of walking today, though the walking will be at a leisurely pace.

Destination Information

Temple Mount - Known in Hebrew as known in Hebrew as *Har Habayit* and in Arabic as the *Haram al-Sharif* (the Noble Sanctuary), this site is of religious significance in both Judaism and Islam. On Israeli land but administered by a Muslim religious trust, Temple Mount contains both the Dome of the Rock and the Al Aksa Mosque in its interior, two of Jerusalem's most recognised and holy landmarks.

Days 9-10: Depart Jerusalem

Transfer to Ben Gurion Airport for your onward arrangements.

Please note: Late check-out is not included in our Ancient Israel tour. If you wish to book a late check-out for your final day in Jerusalem, please contact our reservations department who can confirm the additional price and make this arrangement for you, subject to availability at the hotel.

Transfers: In the event that your flight departs outside of the majority group departure time, you will be transferred to the airport by a shared coach (not with other Wendy Wu Tours passengers).

Please inform our reservations team of any allergies and/or special dietary requirements at time of booking.

Ancient Israel Travel Information

Visas

Entry visas are required by all visitors to Israel and Wendy Wu Tours Visa Department can assist you with the process of obtaining a visa. Please be advised that your passport must have at least six months validity left on it when you arrive back into Australia.

For the latest information on visa procedures, processing times and requirements, please kindly refer to our website <https://www.wendywutours.com.au/help-and-advice/passports-and-visas/>

Please note the visa procedures and requirements may change at any time. These changes are often made by the relevant embassy or consulate, Wendy Wu Tours acts as a third party and has no influence on the process of a visa.

Wendy Wu Tours does not accept responsibility for lost or undelivered items.

All information with regards to visas will be updated regularly on our website as we find visas process' are changing on regular basis.

Insurance

We strongly recommend that you take out a policy as soon as you pay your deposit. Wendy Wu Tours cannot in any way be made liable for any additional cost incurred by the customer on any tour due to the customer not having adequate travel insurance.

We also encourage all customers to take a copy of their travel insurance documents (especially relevant international contact numbers) with them while on tour. We advise that you check the inclusions and procedures for lodging claims prior to your departure. These documents should be stored separately from the original.

Eating in Israel

Israeli food offers you a wonderful culinary delight. With various food choices like Pita bread, Hummus, Kebabs and Shwarmas, it makes for a difficult choice but guaranteed to leave long lasting taste. Israel has many delicacies and a traditional meal consists of hummus, small plates of a variety of salads and warm pita bread. Mujaddara is a dish of cooked lentils with rice and sautéed onions.

Those with dietary requirements will be well catered for - just make sure to inform your booking agent of any specific requirements well in advance of your trip.

All the restaurants we visit will be researched and inspected regularly to ensure that they follow the strictest health, cleanliness, and safety guidelines. All waiting staff will wear face masks and gloves and self-service buffets will be avoided in favour of à la carte dining, waiter-served meals, or waiter-assisted buffets. Hand sanitiser will be provided to the group before and after every food and beverage service.

Please read your travel guide, which you will receive with your final documents for more information about eating in Israel. We recommend that when it comes to Israelian food, you stay open minded and try to be adventurous!

Accommodation

Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family run guesthouse in a smaller town. In more remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have all western amenities. Hotels are generally rated as local three to four-star standard. All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning or overhead fans and a telephone. Plumbing and electricity supplies can be erratic and quite often the power in hotel rooms is turned off while guests are out of the room. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your National Escort. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs. Please note that double bed requests can be made at time of booking but can't be guaranteed.

Porterage

Please be aware that porterage is not included on our tours in Israel. You will therefore need to be able to handle your own luggage within the hotel and when using transportation like trains and coaches.

Transport

Coaches: Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. Roads in -Israel have generally improved over recent years, but traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. Road construction work usually covers an enormous section of road – not just 1-2 -kilometers as you may be used to. For this reason, the timings listed in the itinerary are approximations only. There may be sections of road where the surface is comparatively bumpy, but our drivers will do their utmost to lessen the impact.

Development in Israel

Israel is a developed country and as such matches the west in modernity and technological advances in many aspects. Israel is a safe country to visit and the locals are very friendly and willing to help visitors.

Public Holidays in Israel

If you are travelling within the below Israeli Public Holidays, please note that celebrations can last a couple of days and during these times some businesses will be closed. Coach, air and train travel may be affected. Tourist attractions will be open but may be crowded. First day of Passover 27 – 28 Mar 2021, Seventh Day of Passover 2-3 April 2021, Yom Ha'atzmaut 15-15 Apr 2021, Shavuot 16-17 May 2021, Rosh Hashanah 6-8 Sep 2021, Yom Kippur 15-16 Sep 2021, First Day of Sukkot 20-21 Sep 2021, Shemini Atzeret 27-28 Sep 2021

Souvenirs

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs, so we include some stops at museums or exhibitions that demonstrates a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not for everyone so we aim to take you to places that hold local interest. We trust you will enjoy these opportunities to learn about local arts and crafts and understand their historical and cultural importance.

Group Size

The group size on our Middle East Classic Tours is on average 10-18 passengers, with a maximum group size of 18. You may encounter other Wendy Wu tour groups while you are travelling. On our group tours we operate a seat-and-a-half policy, allowing you to travel in greater comfort.

All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 8 travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). A national escort will accompany each group of 10 or more. However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so.

Tipping Policy

Tipping in Israel is a way to show satisfaction with the service of guides and drivers. It is not always clear who it is appropriate to tip and how much. Furthermore, travellers may not have the right amounts of cash available at the right time. Therefore, in order to avoid any inconvenience, Wendy Wu Tours operates a tipping policy where a stated amount in US dollars is given to your National Escort at the beginning of your tour and tips are disbursed throughout your tour. The amount is designed to be at a reasonable level for travellers while being fair to the local people and includes a gratuity for the National Escort. If you are travelling in a smaller group, we ask for slightly higher amounts per traveller, to be fair to the guide(s).

We generally find that most customers appreciate the convenience of our tipping policy but we do recognize that it may not suit everyone. However, as this is a group tour we ask that everyone follows the same protocol to be fair to other group members and to ensure smooth operation of your tour.

Packing List & Climate

You will find a complete packing list and a helpful climate chart in the 'Suggested Packing List', which will be included in the pre-departure information link sent within your deposit documentation. Seasonal weather patterns can be quite unpredictable. Up to the minute information on worldwide weather can be found on www.weather.com

Luggage

All travelers are limited to two items of luggage each; a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of five kilograms. It is essential that your luggage is lockable. Please note that authorities will only allow bottles onto the aircraft if they have been checked in as main baggage. Bottles in hand luggage may be confiscated.

Exchanging cash

In the larger cities, most major currencies are accepted at cash converters. However, to avoid disruption to the itinerary it is best to exchange money at the airport. ATM's are widely available throughout Israel with the exception of the small towns, and debit and credit cards are widely accepted. However, we recommend having Israeli shekels with you should any of the hotels or restaurants you visit encounter technological issues.

Personal expenses and optional tours

Personal Expense - You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Based on the advice of previous customers an approximate amount of AUD\$250AUD per person, per week should be sufficient; however, for those that can't resist a bargain or may wish to participate in all of the optional excursions, consider allocating a higher amount.

Optional Tours - May be offered in each city you visit during your tour. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits and if seats are available. In your Final Documentation an Optional Excursion Sheet will be included outlining the activities available in each city and local cost associated. Please ensure you have additional funds available if you feel you may wish to participate in any extra activities. Each option will be arranged locally by your National Escort/Local Guide, participation and tipping for optional excursions is completely at your discretion.

Climbing Steps

Sightseeing at a lot of sites of interest involves climbing quite a number of steps. The steps tend to be quite large, not level and sometimes without handrails. You sometimes need to walk from the bus park to the entrance, and/or need to climb some steps inside. People with knee or hip injuries, who have poor balance or are otherwise unable to complete these activities independently should consider the suitability of this itinerary carefully.

Cultural Difference

As foreigners, we are not expected to be knowledgeable about all etiquette, but it will make your time in Israel more enjoyable if you are respectful of local customs. For example Jewish areas of Israel closely observe Shabbat, which begins at sunset Friday and continues until sunset Saturday. This time is considered to be a day of rest, and as a result, driving and using electricity and digital devices are usually restricted.

Vaccinations and Your Health

We recommend that you contact either your GP or Travelvax (1300 360 164) for advice on vaccinations and travel health. Travelvax has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful www.travelvax.com.au

Before You Leave

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with www.smartraveller.gov.au as in the event of an emergency, Australian Consular assistance will be more readily available. You can also access the Australian Government's travel advisory service for up to date information about your destination on the same website.

After your booking

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice followed by deposit documentation, which includes a visa application form (if applicable), and a help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

Last updated: September 2020