

WELCOME

ברוכים הבאים

## 11 DAY | ECOLOGY & NATURE ISRAEL TOUR

11-DAYS | 9-NIGHTS

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### DAY ONE: Sunday

#### *DEPARTURE*

- Depart the U.S.A.

**Overnight: Flight**

### DAY TWO: Monday

#### *ARRIVAL*

- Arrive at Ben Gurion International Airport.
- Welcome by our representative and assistance with arrival formalities.
- **Orientation Program** at the **Jaffa Overlook** for an introduction to Tel Aviv at the place where it all began.
- Check into the hotel.
- *Environment Challenges in Israel 2011* Dialogue with **Prof. Alon Tal** from the Arava Institute, over welcome dinner at a restaurant in Tel Aviv.
- *Optional Evening Tour* of Tel Aviv.

**Overnight: Tel Aviv**

**DAY THREE: Tuesday**

***ISRAEL'S ENVIRONMENTAL MOSAIC***

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- Visit to **Independence Hall**, site of David Ben Gurion's monumental proclamation of the State of Israel in May 1948.
- Bike ride along the **Yarkon River**, following the successful clean-up of one of Israel's most polluted rivers, in conjunction with the **Zalul** environmental organization.
- Lunch on own at the Tel Aviv Port food market.
- Special program at the **Hirriya Recycling Park**, once the main garbage dump of Tel Aviv, it is now the central recycling center and has become one of Tel Aviv's largest parks.
- Walking tour through the colorful re-gentrified **Neve Zedek** one of Tel Aviv's cultural centers with many small boutiques and galleries as well as the Suzanne Delal Dance and Theater Center.
- Return to the hotel.
- Enjoy dinner on your own in **Tel Aviv**, at a choice of a wide array of restaurants from the Tel Aviv Port to Jaffa, and downtown Tel Aviv.

**Overnight: Tel Aviv**

**DAY FOUR: Wednesday**

***REVOLUTION AND EVOLUTION IN ISRAEL***

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- Check out of the hotel.
- *The Electric Car Revolution* Guided visit to the new **Better Place Visitor's Center**, for a glimpse at the premier global provider of electric vehicle services.
- Visit the **Alexander River Restoration Project**, winner of the 2003 International Thiess River Prize, and a unique effort at nature preservation, which is undertaken collaboratively between Israelis and Palestinians.
- Lunch on your own.
- Guided visit to **Caesarea**, one of the Land of Israel's most important cities during the Roman Period; visit the Herodian Theater and new excavations along the Mediterranean shore concluding with a visit to the 900-year-old crusader city built on the same site.
- *Creating Changes in Environmental Attitudes* Meet with **Husein Tarabie**, Head of the Towns Association for Environmental Quality, the first environmental initiative to arise out of the Israeli Arab sector, including a tour at Beit Nekofa Valley.
- Drive to the Upper Galilee.
- Check into the hotel.
- Dinner at a chef restaurant.

**Overnight: Kibbutz Hotel, Upper Galilee**

**DAY FIVE: Thursday**

***"I BORE YOU ON EAGLES' WINGS"***

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- Special bird watching seminar at the **Hula Lake** (Agamon Hahula).
- Nature walk at the **Gamla Reserve** to view the nesting eagles and the flora in the Gamla Canyon with a preservation specialist.
- Lunch on your own.
- Explore Israel's security situation on the **Golan Heights** from **Mt. Bental**, overlooking the abandoned Syrian town of Kuneitra, for a first hand view of Israel's security position along the Syrian Border, including a visit to a former Israeli bunker.
- Walk through the **Tel Dan Nature Reserve** located on the largest tributary of the Jordan River and the Biblical settlement of Dan.
- Return to the kibbutz.
- Dinner at the hotel.

**Overnight: Kibbutz Hotel, Upper Galilee**

**DAY SIX: Friday**

***WILD FLOWERS AND THE OPEN ROAD TO JERUSALEM***

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- Check out of the hotel.
- Guided visit through the **Christian Holy Sites** around the Sea of Galilee, including:
  - The **Mount of Beatitudes**, traditional site of Jesus' 'Sermon on the Mount', overlooking the Sea of Galilee.
  - **Tabgha**, traditional site of the Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes, which is now host to a modern church built on the remains of a Fourth Century church.
- Visit the **Bio-Bee Biological Systems** on **Kibbutz Sde Eliyahu**, leading experts in mass production and implementation of beneficial insects and mites for agricultural purposes, cooperating on a regional level with Palestinians and Jordanians.
- Continue south towards Jerusalem, driving along the **Jordan Rift Valley**.
- **Welcome to Jerusalem – ברוכים הבאים**: Enter the vibrant and colourful 3,000 year old city of Jerusalem and experience the convergence of the old and the new.
- Stop at **Mount Scopus** to say the traditional "**shehechyanu**" blessing, recited upon entering Jerusalem.
- Check into the hotel.
- **Kabbalat Shabbat** services at a local synagogue or at the Kotel.
- **Shabbat Dinner** at the hotel.

**Overnight: Jerusalem**

**DAY SEVEN: Saturday**

***SHABBAT IN JERUSALEM***

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- **Shabbat in Jerusalem** with optional visits on own to:
  - The **Old City Ramparts** for a walk along the ancient walls of the city.
  - The **Tower of David Museum** of the History of Jerusalem, for a walk through the city's history from the time of Abraham to the end of the British Mandate over Palestine.
- Lunch on own.
- Afternoon walking tour through the **Jewish Quarter** of the Old City of Jerusalem, for guided visits to some of the sites excavated over the past 30 years, including:
  - The **Rooftops** of the Old City for a behind the scenes look at the various communities in Jerusalem and how they live together.
  - The **Cardo**, a Byzantine street that is now the oldest shopping arcade in the world.
  - The **Hurva Square**, the central square of the Jewish Quarter.
  - The **Kotel** (Western Wall).
- Enjoy dinner on your own in **Jerusalem**, at a choice of a wide array of restaurants.
- **The Night Spectacular** at the **Tower of David Museum** - The walls of the Citadel serve as a stage for a night time show which is a celebration of sight and sound, depicting the story of Jerusalem.

**Overnight: Jerusalem**

**DAY EIGHT: Sunday**

***DEEP INTO THE DESERT***

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- Check out of the hotel.
- Depart Jerusalem, driving south through the **Judean Desert**.
- Meet with **Fran Ran**, Development Director at the **Israel Union for Environmental Defense**, on the issue of using the Dead Sea as a natural resort.
- Lunch on your own, en route.
- Experience the weightlessness of the **Dead Sea** as you float in its waters.
- Relax on the bus as you continue south to the edge of the Arava Desert.
- Visit **Kibbutz Lotan**, associated with the Reform Movement and an innovative world leader providing ecological response to the challenges around us.
- Dinner at the kibbutz.

**Overnight: Kibbutz Hotel, Arava**

**DAY NINE: Monday**

***JUDAISM AND THE WORLD AROUND US***

- Breakfast at the kibbutz guesthouse.
- Visit the **Solar Energy Experiment Field** at Kibbutz Ketura.
- Stop at **Kibbutz Neot Smadar** for a guided tour of this unique community. Gain further perspective on coexistence with the world around us, including lunch.
- Continue towards the Ramon Crater.
- Jeep tour to explore the geological wonders of the **Ramon Crater** with a stop for a walk to the unique natural phenomenon known as the **Carpentry Shop**.
- Opportunity to **meditate** in the wilderness of the **Ramon Crater**.
- Check into the hotel.
- Dinner at the hotel.

**Overnight: Mitzpe Ramon**

**DAY TEN: Tuesday**

***TRANSFORMING DREAMS TO REALITY IN ISRAEL***

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- Check out of the hotel.
- Visit the gravesite of Israel's first Prime Minister, **David Ben Gurion**, located at **Kibbutz Sde Boker** overlooking the Wilderness of Zinn in the Negev Desert, followed by a nature walk in the Ein Avdat spring. Discuss Ben Gurion's vision of 'making the desert bloom', and whether there are challenges that coincide with the 'conquest of the desert'.
- Pamper yourself at the **Neve Midbar Spa** in the heart of the Negev, including thermo-mineral indoor pools, an outdoor pool, steam and dry saunas and many different treatments that will hit the spot as the trip comes to a close.
- Continue north to Tel Aviv-Jaffa.
- Visit the **Old City of Jaffa** and stroll through the renovated artists' colony and the ancient port.
- Check into the hotel.
- **Farewell Dinner** at a local restaurant.

**Overnight: Tel Aviv**

**DAY ELEVEN: Wednesday**

***RETURN***

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- Check out of the hotel.
- Transfer to Ben Gurion Airport.
- Departure flight to the U.S.A., arriving the same day.