

Monday March 16 כ"ה אדר

Our first stop in the Dutch capital will be the **Anne Frank Museum**, including the annex where Anne Frank and her family were hidden during the holocaust. Following this we will visit the famed **Rijks Museum**, home to a magnificent selection of Dutch paintings from the Golden age. Then a short bus tour around the some of the villages surrounding Amsterdam before returning to the airport for our **flight to Tel Aviv**.

Tuesday March 17 כ"ו אדר

Footsteps into the Land of Israel

Overnight: Karei Deshe Hostel, Kinneret



After a 2.30am early morning **arrival at Ben Gurion airport**. Meet your Israel Connection team and tour guide. **Mark your arrival** with your first **Shacharit in Eretz Yisrael**.

Then head North to **Kfar Kedem** where breakfast awaits. Kfar Kedem is a village where the past comes to life. Here, you will be transported back to the days of ancient Israel as you participate in some of the activities of daily life back then including bread making, donkey riding and more.

After a brief stop for **lunch in Nahariyah**, head over to **Rosh HaNikra** and visit the amazing water grottos on the North Western border of Israel.

These beautiful grottos cut into the cliff and formed by the sea are accessed by a special cable car.

Then head over to Karei deshe hostel on the shores of the Kinneret to check in.

After a chance to rest it is time to head out once more to enjoy the sight of the sun setting from the **Arbel cliffs**. Enjoy the spectacular view over the Kinneret, Galilee and Golan Heights.

Wednesday March 18 כ"ז אדר

Exploring the Golan

Overnight: Karei Deshe Hostel, Kinneret

After tfilah we will start our day out with an energetic **hike along the Jilabon stream** in the Golan Heights. Marvel at the stunning waterfalls and beautiful vegetation that fills the region.

Stop for lunch in **Katzrin**, capital of the Golan. While you are there enjoy the Kesem HaGolan (Magic Golan) 4D movie experience where you can see, hear, smell and feel the beauty of the region.

Then head over to **Mt. Bental**, a former military base that overlooks the Syrian border. Understand the strategic importance of this area and the price that was paid to capture and hold the Golan Heights in the wars of 1967 and 1973. At nearby Kibbutz Elrom watch the award winning documentary **movie Oz77** about the Yom Kippur war and the bravery of the soldiers who fought in it.

Thursday March 19 כ"ח אדר

On the Borders

Overnight: Karei Deshe Hostel, Kinneret

Following *tfilah* we will spend the morning exploring the **old City of Tzfat**, one of the four ancient holy cities of the Land of Israel. Visit the synagogues, cemetery and alleyways of this mystical town where the Kabbalistic tradition was born. Meet with **Kabbalistic artist David Friedman**. Hear the tales of its Rabbis and learn of its many miracles. As they say here "if you believe every story you are told in Tzfat you are a fool, but if you believe none of them you are an even greater fool"

In the afternoon enjoy a hike around the top of nearby **Mt. Merom** and marvel at the spectacular 360 degree views of the Galilee.

Then visit the world's highest **Kibbutz, Misgav Am**, whose perimeter fence is also Israel's border with Lebanon. Meet with local residents who will share with you their experience of living literally on the border.



Descend down the mountain stopping on the way at the famous '**Roaring Lion**,' a symbol of **Tel Chai** and of heroism. The Battle of Tel Chai in 1920 is considered the first battle in Israel's history and the lion is a lasting memorial to the eight who were killed there. Among them was Josef Trumpeldor whose reported last words were "Never mind, it is good to die for our country." Almost a century later we might say "It is good to have a country worth dying for".

Free evening and pizza dinner in **Tiberias**

Friday March 20 כ"ט אדר

Zionism in an Old-New Land

Overnight: Beit Shmuel hostel, Jerusalem

After an early *tfilah* we will depart and head to **Tel Aviv**. There, soak in the weekend atmosphere of the **Ne've Tzedek** and **Jaffa neighborhoods**. Browse for unique gifts in the **Nachalat Binyamin** craft market.

Then after lunch head to **Jerusalem**. Check into your hostel and prepare for Shabbat.

After lighting candles together, walk to the **Kotel** to welcome Shabbat with singing and dancing in the **Holy city of Jerusalem**.

Return to your hostel for Shabbat dinner and oneg.



Shabbat March 21 א' ניסן

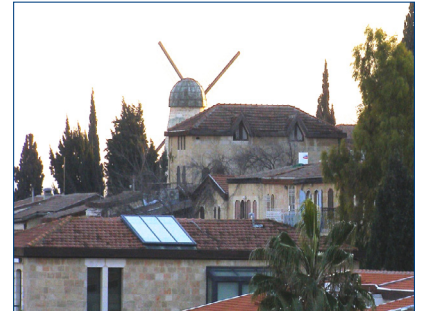
Shabbat Kodesh

Overnight: Beit Shmuel hostel, Jerusalem

Enjoy a relaxing and restful Shabbat in the Holy city of Jerusalem. Join with Jerusalemites for **tfilat Shacharit** at the famed **Yeshurun Synagogue**.

After a group activity and Shabbat lunch at your hostel, head out on a walking tour of the **Yemin Moshe** neighborhood.

End Shabbat with Havdallah under the stars. Then enjoy the motzai Shabbat atmosphere of **Ben Yehuda Street**.



Sunday March 22 ב' ניסן



Out of the Ashes

Overnight: Beit Shmuel hostel, Jerusalem

Morning tfilah will be followed by our visit **Yad Vashem**, Israel's national Holocaust memorial museum. There experience a special tour of the museum with expert guides from Yad Vashem's education department.

Above Yad Vashem sits **Har Herzl**, the national military cemetery of Israel. Here former Prime Ministers and Presidents are buried along with soldiers who gave up their lives for their nation. The mountain honors the builders and heroes of Israel. It is named for the Zionist visionary Theodore Herzl. During our time on the mountain we will have the opportunity to both visit his grave and tour the innovative experiential Herzl museum which tells the story of Herzl the man and reflects on his legacy.

Then we will return to our hotel to meet with **Israeli poet** and Kibbutz Kfar Ezion member, **Eliaz Cohen** who will share with us his experiences as an artist, a religious settler and an activist in Israeli-Palestinian dialogue groups.

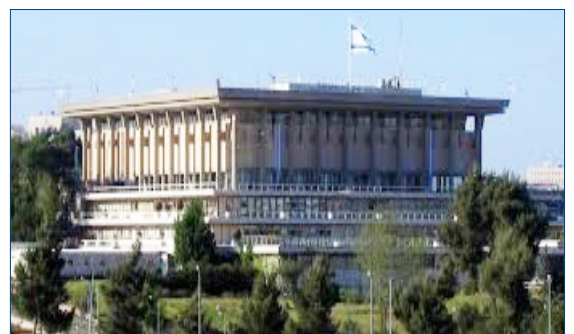
Monday March 23 ג' ניסן

Jerusalem – Eternal Capital of the Jewish People

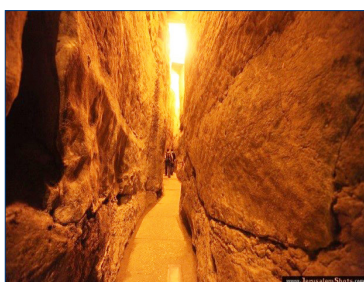
Overnight: Beit Shmuel hostel, Jerusalem

We will begin our day at Israel's Parliament, the **Knesset**.

From the **Knesset**, which is the center of sovereignty of the contemporary Israeli state, we will leap back 3,000 years to the center of Jewish sovereignty in Biblical times, the **City of David**.



We will stand where David stood, where his son Shlomo was crowned King and where Yirmiyahu prophesized. We will walk through the dark water tunnels dug by King Hezekiah to protect the City from the Assyrian siege and marvel at the amazing engineering achievement.



Then we will ascend to another set of tunnels – the **Kotel tunnels** that run alongside the Western Wall. Unlike the water tunnels dug in Biblical times, the Kotel tunnels were dug out in modern times by archeologists to expose the ancient remains of the Temple Mount structure. This impressive and astonishing construction, initiated by King Herod, includes the largest stones found in antiquity, thereby providing us with our second ancient engineering marvel of the day. The full length of the wall is exposed and we will walk along the same stones that the pilgrims walked as they visited the Beit HaMikdash.

We will end our day with a special dinner at the famous **Burger's Bar** in the Old City and with an **Israel Update** that will answer our questions about the current situation of the State.

Tuesday March 24 ד' ניסן

Digging in our past and present

Overnight: Arad youth hostel, Arad

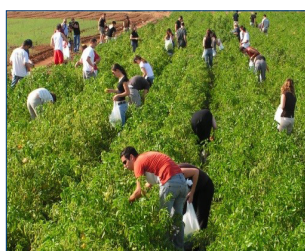
Morning tfilah

After checking out of our hostel we will head to **Latrun, Israel's tank museum** and site of major battles during the War of Independence. After touring the museum with serving Israeli soldiers (and posing for the requisite photo on a tank) we will head to the **Ela Valley** where we will walk with the Tenach in our hand in the place where David once fought Goliath.



Having figuratively dug into our People's past we will now have the chance to do this literally at the **archeological dig of Burgin**. Burgin is the second Temple period town of Kfar Bish mentioned in the writings of Josephus and in the Talmud. The town was saved from destruction during the Great revolt and we will have the chance to uncover the secrets hidden beneath the earth.

After lunch we will head south into the **Negev**. Of the approximately 630,000 Israeli residents of the Negev, around 200,000 are Bedouin. We will learn about **Bedouin culture** and life at the **Joe Allon center**.



In our last activity of the day we again walk in the footsteps of our ancient past; this time by participating in the Biblical practice of **leket**, or gleaning. We will work in fields harvesting donated produce for the poor and hungry of the State of Israel.

We will end our day in Arad where we will check in and have dinner in the Arad Youth Hostel.

ה' ניסן 25 Wednesday March 25

Life and Death in the Desert

Overnight: Arad youth hostel, Arad

After a **desert inspired tfilah** we will head to Kfar Nokdim for a **camel ride** in this impressive landscape.

Then it is over to the ancient fortress of **Masada** build by King Herod 2000 years ago as a desert retreat from his enemies. Here the last rebels of the Great Revolt held out against the might of Rome. Listen and hear if you can discern their voices and their message amid the desert winds and mountain echoes. Masada will not fall again. After touring the mountain we will descend down the famed snake path and enjoy a well-deserved lunch.



In the afternoon we will walk along the streams of **Ein Gedi**, the natural desert oasis where David hid from King Shaul more than 3000 years ago. If you are lucky you may catch sight of a desert hyrax or ibex that populate this nature reserve. The Hebrew word for desert – midbar shares a root with the word for speak – medaber. What does the desert say to you?

Before returning to Arad, we end our day with the unforgettable experience of floating in the **Dead Sea**, the lowest point on earth. Even in March its waters are warm and its unique salty waters - ten times saltier than a regular sea – make it impossible to sink.

ו' ניסן 26 Thursday March 26

Israel in 2015

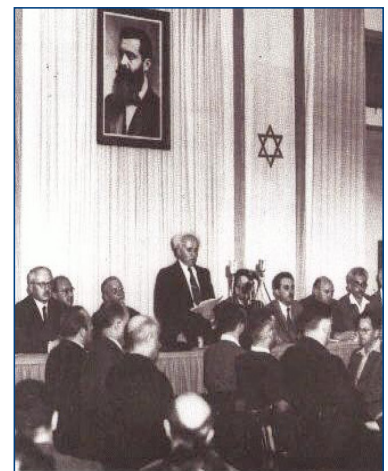
Overnight: Beit Shmuel hostel, Jerusalem

After tfilah and check out we will drive north toward Holon. There we will visit **Dialogue in the Dark**, a very special museum, that recreates the experience of blindness.

Then onwards to **Tel Aviv** where we will go to **Independence Hall**, where 67 years ago, on Friday afternoon in 1948, the State of Israel was declared. The room remains set up as it was on that momentous day. We will sit in the original seats and relive the historic moment, breathing in the aura of all of the hopes and expectations of the Jewish Democratic State.

We will round off our day with a **BBQ** hosted by Israeli friends of Oakland Hebrew Day School.

Students will then depart (from Beit Shemesh or Jerusalem) for a **free Shabbat** with friends and family.



■ Friday March 27 ד' ניסן

With host families

■ Shabbat March 28 ה' ניסן

Closing the Circle

After our Shabbat with host families we will regroup in Jerusalem at 9.30pm for a final visit to the Kotel and to reflect on the last two amazing weeks and on what Israel has come to mean to us through this trip. We will depart Jerusalem and head to Ramat Gan for a farewell party at Black Burger before heading to Ben Gurion airport for our departure flight.



L'shana Haba b'yerushalyim