



2009 Mystical Israel

**A NATION OF CONTRASTS, BLENDING HISTORY AND NATURAL
WONDER WITH MODERN CITY LIFE AND ARTS**



TEL AVIV • OLD JAFFA • HAIFA • TIBERIAS • JERUSALEM

Like pages torn from the Bible, this journey reveals the tale of this sacred land. As the cradle of many faiths, Israel offers a rich and diverse collection of holy sites and cities to visit. From Nazareth to Bethlehem, Mount of Olive to Mount Zion, and the hills of Galilee to the Rosh Hanikra's Sea Caves, your pilgrimage unfolds revealing treasures of timeless value.

JOURNEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore holy sites of all faiths with expert guides
- Cruise across the Sea of Galilee as the morning sun gilds the waters
- Ascend the fortress of Masada to view Herod's ruined palaces
- Experience Israel's unique form of communal living at Kibbutz Ginosar
- Relive the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls at the caves of Qumran
- Observe the traditional Jewish custom of praying at the Western Wall
- Enjoy special deluxe accommodations including:
 - Executive Sea-View Rooms in Tel Aviv
 - Deluxe Sea-View Rooms at the Scots Hotel in Tiberias
 - Deluxe Old City View Rooms at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem



DAILY ITINERARY

Travcoa journeys are designed to accommodate the most common flight times from the USA. The first and last included accommodation and meals are specified in the itinerary below.

DAYS 1 & 2, Monday & Tuesday **Depart USA for Tel Aviv, ISRAEL**

Journey accommodations begin with the hotel night on Day 2. Check-in time is approximately 3pm.

Included meal services begin with Dinner on Day 2.

Depart home on Monday and arrive at Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv on Tuesday. Upon arrival you will be met and taken to your hotel in the heart of Tel Aviv. Tonight enjoy a welcome cocktail and dinner party.

Dan Tel Aviv Hotel

DAY 3, Wednesday **Tel Aviv & Old Jaffa**

Our encounter with this vibrant city starts at Beth Hatefutsoth, the Museum of the Jewish People. There we discover intriguing stories and gain historical insights on the dispersion of Jews outside of Israel since they were exiled to Babylonia in 6th-century B.C.

In Old Jaffa, the world's oldest port, walk the winding cobblestone streets that lead to the heart of a charming artists' colony where art galleries and high quality craft shops seduce you to browse. Hunt for amazing bargains on small ornamental articles and fine, authentic antiques at the colorful Jaffa Flea Market.

Dan Tel Aviv Hotel

DAY 4, Thursday **Tel Aviv & Haifa**

Drive along the Mediterranean shores via Herzlia's plush residential area to the port city of Caesarea. Explore the fascinating ruins of this ancient Roman city and Crusader stronghold. View the ancient Roman Amphitheatre, still in use today as one of the most popular sites for musical performances.

In 30 B.C., the village of Turrus Stratonis fell under the rule of King Herod of Judea. He renamed the village Caesarea in honor of Caesar Augustus and transformed the area into a city built on Roman design. Caesarea boasted of the most advanced technology of the time, including plumbing for private and public baths and heating for the calidarium. The city contained a

hippodrome and temples to a variety of gods, including Augustus and Roma. Herod fashioned Caesarea as a model Roman city that stretched about four miles in every direction from the harbor, and was enclosed by a wall.

History continues to unfold in Acre as we visit Djazzar Pasha Mosque, the crypt of St. John, and the colorful bazaar. Historical giants such Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Francis of Assisi and Marco Polo (who sailed on his journey to the Orient from Acre), visited this ancient seaport city.

Named for an ancient Hebrew word meaning "hot sand," the city of Acre is spelled with many variations - Akko, Accho and Acca. In 200 B.C. the city was renamed Ptolemais to honor one of the Ptolemies of Egypt. The Franks changed it to Acre in the 12th century. The Crusaders related this name to "arc" and called the city St. Jean d' Acre, after their heroine, Joan of Arc. The shortened version, Acre, is still used by Europeans, while the original name of Acco is used in Israel.

Ascend Mount Carmel for a breathtaking view of the city and its bustling port. The prominent, gleaming golden dome and quiet impressive gardens of the Bahai Shrine are a marvel, as is the quiet contemplation you will experience at Stella Maris Convent.

Dan Carmel Haifa Hotel

DAY 5, Friday

Haifa, Nazareth & Tiberias

Site of one of the Christian religion's most profound miracles, the picturesque Christian town of Nazareth is as historical as it is special. Stand in the footsteps of holy men and women when you visit the Church of the Annunciation and Joseph's Workshop. Uphill on Paul VI Street, you will visit Mary's Well, the water of which is said to heal all ailments.

After lunch continue to Safed to visit the old Synagogue, historic city and artistic colony. Our overnight will be at the Scots Hotel which is uniquely situated in the centre of Tiberias with direct frontage on to the Sea of Galilee.

Scots Hotel

DAY 6, Saturday

Tiberias

Ride a boat across the Sea of Galilee from Tiberias to Kibbutz Ginosar for a visit highlighting Israel's unique form of communal living. The former home of one of Israel's great statesmen, Yigal Allon, the kibbutz has a museum devoted to Allon's life and the history of the Galilee region. It also houses the "Jesus boat," a 2,000-year-old boat excavated from the Kinneret in 1985 that was probably used at the time of Jesus.

Continue to Capernaum where the remains of the famous 2nd-century synagogue beckon. High up on the Mount of the Beatitudes, imagine hearing the Sermon on the Mount, one of Christ's sermons given on a mountain near Capernaum on the north end of the Sea of Galilee. We travel to Tabgha to recall the New Testament Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes.

In Israel's most mountainous region, Golan Heights, we stop for a visit and tasting at a local Israeli winery in Katzrim, a Talmudic ancient city of just 70 families where homes are handmade of basalt. We travel to Tabgha to recall the New Testament Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes.

Scots Hotel

DAY 7, Sunday
Tiberias, Jerusalem

The winding mountain roads and the Jordan Valley take us to Bet She'an, or House of Rest and Quiet, Israel's equivalent of Pompeii, to survey the extraordinary excavations of this ancient Roman city. Driving to Qumran we discover the caves where the intriguing Dead Sea Scrolls were found.

We arrive in Jerusalem, a 3,000-year-old city that is also a thriving metropolis. This ancient place is like no other city on earth. It is holy to the world's three major monotheistic religions and was fought over for three millennia by a variety of peoples and nations because of its historical, cultural, and religious significances.

The King David Jerusalem

DAY 8, Monday
Jerusalem

Take a dip in the salty and mineral buoyant waters of the Dead Sea or just relax on the shores. Actually a large inland lake, the Dead Sea was given its name by Christian monks who noticed that nothing lived in it. That is because it is the saltiest water anywhere in the world, almost six times as salty as ocean water. The salts found in the Dead Sea are mineral salts, just like those found in the world's oceans, only in extreme concentration. As far back as King Solomon, Queen Cleopatra and Herod the Great, people have visited the area to enjoy the sea's therapeutic properties.

At the top of an isolated rock on the edge of the Judean Desert sits Masada. Isolated from its surroundings by deep gorges on all sides, this was the last stronghold of the Jewish zealots in their war against the Romans in 73 A.D. It was a natural place to build a fortress. Access in ancient times was by a steep "Snake Path" from the east, the "White Rock" from the west, or two difficult climbing approaches from north or south. We opt for an exciting, and much easier, ascent by cable car.

We proceed to Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus and King David. Time seems to stand still as we absorb this land's designation as the cradle of Christianity with visits to the Church of the Nativity, Manger Square and Shepherd's Field. Return to Jerusalem for the night.

The King David Jerusalem

DAY 9, Tuesday

Jerusalem

On the Mount of Olives, we marvel at the Church of Ascension and the Garden of Gethsemane. The Mount of Olives has two peaks. The higher one to the north is the site of several Christian churches. The lower peak of the Mount of Olives is to the south and on its western slope is the largest and most ancient Jewish cemetery.

As we explore the Dome of the Rock, notice its finely inscribed quotations from the Koran. Known in Arabic as Qubbat As-Sakhrah, this is not a mosque for public worship but rather a mashhad, a shrine for pilgrims. Designed by Byzantine architects, the Dome of the Rock was the greatest monumental building in early Islamic history. The dome's supporting structure, made of lead, was originally covered in pure gold. The sacred foundation stone is encircled by arches from different churches in Jerusalem, which were destroyed during the Persian occupation of the city. The structure is most recognized by its brilliant mosaics.

Experience the Western Wall, also known as the Wailing Wall, the holiest shrine in the world for Jews. The wall is the only remaining structure of the ancient Temple of Jerusalem. King Solomon's glorious temple once stood inside the courtyard. The temple was destroyed and rebuilt several times until only part of the western wall remained. The wall is just outside of the Temple Mount and is considered to be Judaism's holiest site.

On Mt. Zion we visit the Tomb of King David, the Room of the Last Supper and the Church of St. Peter in Gallicantu, on the eastern slopes of Mount Zion. Erected in 1931 to commemorate Peter's triple rejection of Jesus and his subsequent remorse, the church blends contemporary lines, primitive art and antiquity. Beneath the church, discover a series of carved-out chambers from the Second Temple period. Since Catholic tradition positions the palace of Caiaphas on this very site, it logically follows that Jesus may have been imprisoned in one of these very same underground crypts. On your way into the Church of St. Peter, look for a strange mosaic "window" which lets in no light: it is located on an outside wall as you approach the entrance to the upper sanctuary.

The King David Jerusalem

DAY 10, Wednesday
Jerusalem

Immerse yourself in all the differences that make Israel so unique and inviting with a visit to the Knesset (Israel's Parliament) to see the Model of the First Century, a look at this ancient city as it was 2,000 years ago. Visit the Shrine of the Book, where the Dead Sea Scrolls are housed, the Hadassah Medical Center, where Chagall stained glass windows depict the 12 Tribes of Israel, and finally the Yad Vashem, a memorial dedicated to the Martyrs and Heroes of the Holocaust.

There's time to walk through the exotic Arab bazaar visit the Church of St. Anne and experience Way of the Cross. On to the Pool of Bethesda, where Jesus healed the man at the waters; Flagellation Church; the Stations of the Cross, where you can walk in the footsteps of Jesus as told in the New Testament of the Holy Bible; Calvary; and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Wonder after wonder unfold before your eyes.

Tonight, enjoy a cocktail and dinner party to bid farewell to Israel and fellow travelers.

The King David Jerusalem

DAY 11, Thursday
Depart Jerusalem

In the morning, you will be taken to Ben Gurion Airport for your return flight home or onwards to your next destination.

Journey accommodations end with the hotel night on Day 10. Check-out time is approximately 11am on Day 11.

Included meal services end with Breakfast on Day 11.

NOTE: The Daily Itinerary above is subject to change dependent upon local conditions and/or operational changes or improvements. The specific times and order of inclusions within each destination may also be altered to best accommodate unscheduled closures, special events, weather, traffic, etc. Please contact your Vacation Planner before scheduling any coinciding appointments. You will receive an up-dated, itinerary approximately 30 days prior to your journey's scheduled departure date.

ACCOMMODATIONS

DAYS 2 & 3	Tel Aviv, Dan Tel Aviv Hotel
DAY 4	Haifa, Dan Carmel Haifa Hotel
DAYS 5 & 6	Tiberias, Scots Hotel
DAYS 7 - 10	Jerusalem, The King David Jerusalem

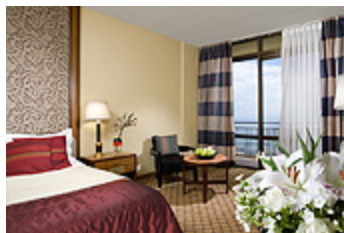
Tel Aviv, Dan Tel Aviv Hotel

On a shoreline lapped by the blue Mediterranean, your hotel enjoys the urban sophistication of Tel Aviv with convenience to shopping, restaurants and nightlife, yet is away from bustle of the city. The hotel is also a member of *The Leading Hotels of the World*. Your comfortable room may have a sea view of the best beach in the area. Indulge in the newly renovated Spa with an indoor pool, or go for a swim in the fabulous outdoor salt water pool with sea and skyline vistas. Other hotel features and services include laundry service, 24-hour room service, a beauty salon, and retail shops.

Travcoa has reserved an Executive Sea View room for you, which includes cable TV, mini-bar, in-room safe, wireless internet access, and access to the Kind David Crown Lounge serving refreshments and snacks throughout the day.

Haifa, Dan Carmel Haifa Hotel

An idyllic setting for exploring the area, your classically elegant hotel commands unforgettable panoramic views of the bay and the city of Haifa. Its private gardens, verdant hillsides and endless coastline provide you with unmatched location on the crest of Mount Carmel. Gracious service and an atmosphere both luxurious and soothing, provide an extraordinary setting for enjoying the beauty of Haifa and the Galilee. The hotel features a swimming pool, health club, sauna, fitness and massage and nearby tennis and squash. There is also gift shops, laundry/dry cleaning services, a beauty salon and a wine gallery.



Your Executive Bay View guestroom is above the 4th floor, with a balcony overlooking beautiful Haifa Bay and the Mediterranean.. Amenities include a mini-bar, in-room safe, cable TV, wireless internet access, luxurious linens and toiletries and other fine amenities, and free use of the King David Lounge.

Tiberias, Scots Hotel

The Scots Hotel is uniquely situated in the centre of Tiberias with direct frontage on to the Sea of Galilee. The Scots Hotel, combining peace and tranquility with history and unrivalled service will ensure your visit is the ultimate retreat for body, mind and spirit.

This boutique hotel complex, owned by The Church of Scotland, comprises several sensitively refurbished 19th century basalt stone buildings together with a “new build” main bedroom block. Redesigned and planned with the clear intention of preserving the original character and air of the properties, the outcome is a unique harmony of old and new, combining the original architectural style with the modern amenities you would expect of a five star hotel.

Jerusalem, The King David Jerusalem



The flagship of the Dan Hotels, this majestic, historic building is situated in the center of Jerusalem and is the perennial host to world leaders and celebrities. Marvel at the fabled skyline of the Old City from the terraces. Facilities include an outdoor heated swimming pool, children's pool, fitness center, sauna, tennis courts, business center, laundry/dry cleaning service. jewelry store and art gallery.

Your recently renovated spacious room is thoughtfully furnished and well-equipped with all of the comforts you'd expect in a luxurious hotel., including wireless internet access, Cable TV with CNN, minibar, hairdryer and a bathroom scale. Travcoa has reserved deluxe Old City view rooms.

<u>TRAVEL PLANNING DETAILS</u>

2009 Departure Dates & Prices

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Travcoa Select</u>	<u>Select Single Suppl.</u>
Mar. 16 – 26, 2009	\$ 7,495	2,045
Oct. 19 - 29, 2009	\$ 7,495	2,045

11-Day Itinerary: *Per person price is based upon two people sharing a room. Airfare is additional. Check with Travcoa for special international airfares.*

Intra- tour air is not required on this journey.

JOURNEY PACE: ACTIVE

All guests are expected to be in good health. We consider our journeys to be active. Moderate to strenuous exertion, including long walks on rough uneven terrain, climbing stairs and long drives on rough roads are an integral part of your journey. There are full action-packed days.

For a more detailed description of the special requirements for this journey, and to check if this journey is right for you, please speak with a Travcoa representative.

RENDEZVOUS & SCHEDULE POINTS

Below are the times and locations where this journey officially begins and ends. Travcoa is pleased to provide arrival and departure transfers between the designated airport city and the Rendezvous location when confirmed flight details are provided with final payment.

Day 1	Monday	Depart Hometown
Day 2	Tuesday	<p>Arrive Tel Aviv, Israel <u>Meeting Point</u>- Tel Aviv, Dan Tel Aviv Hotel, after lunch <i>Journey accommodations begin with the hotel night on Day 2. Check-in time is approximately 3pm.</i> <i>Included meal services begin with Dinner on Day 2.</i></p>
Day 11	Thursday	<p>Depart Jerusalem, Israel <u>Farewell Point</u> - Jerusalem, The King David Hotel, after breakfast <i>Journey accommodations end with the hotel night on Day 10. Check-out time is approximately 11am on Day 11.</i> <i>Included meal services end with Breakfast on Day 11.</i> Arrive Hometown</p>

INTERNATIONAL AIR FLIGHTS

Airfares vary according to airline, departure city and seat category, and are based on availability and subject to change. Travcoa is pleased to assist you with your air reservations for this journey.

The recommended air carriers for this journey are: Lufthansa, Air France & British Airways. Please check with Travcoa for schedules and rates on our preferred carriers.

If you are arranging your own flights, please take careful note of the Rendezvous Points above. Our office requires flight details 2 months prior to departure to provide your included journey arrival and departure airport transfers.

EXTENDING YOUR STAY

This Travcoa escorted journey is designed to give you an in-depth experience of this region. If you have more time, you may choose to extend your travels and explore more of this region or other nearby areas. Some recommended options on how to extend your travel are listed below.

EXTRA HOTEL NIGHTS:

Many guests choose to add additional hotel nights before and/or after their journey to help acclimate after long international flights or to do some independent exploration. Travcoa is happy to secure those hotel reservations for you. Travcoa still provides airport assistance and journey hotel transfers if you choose to arrive early or depart after the journey.

Call for pre-tour or post-tour rates at **Dan Tel Aviv Hotel in Tel Aviv** or the **King David Jerusalem in Jerusalem**. Extra hotel nights are subject to availability.

CONNECTING TO ANOTHER ESCORTED JOURNEY:

For a more in-depth experience of this region, we recommend extending your travels by preceding this journey with our *Ancient Roads of Syria & Jordan*. Adjacent to Israel, our Syria and Jordan escorted journey includes visits to Damascus, Palmyra, Aleppo, Baalbek, (Lebanon), Amman, Jerash, Petra, and much more. Contact a Journey Planner for more details.

CUSTOM JOURNEY EXTENSIONS:

Travcoa can create customized independent itineraries designed around your special interests and desired travel dates. These can be arranged as extensions either before and/or after your escorted journey.

The Middle East and North Africa offers countless options for additional independent travel, but as an extension to this journey we suggest a visit to **Jordan**. It is just a short flight to the Kingdom of Jordan, and in less than a week you can take in the highlights of this unique and ancient land. Tour the capital city Amman, visit the Greco-Roman ruins of Jerash, explore the fabulous lost city of Petra, and much, much more.

Contact a Travcoa Journey Planner for more details.

***NOTE:** If you are connecting this journey with another Travcoa escorted or custom journey, please remember the connecting flights between journeys are NOT included. Please contact Travcoa for the recommended connecting flight schedule.*

YOUR TRAVCOA JOURNEY INCLUDES:

- Deluxe rooms in the best available hotels*
- Three meals per day, including our unique Dine-Around program that lets you enjoy any restaurant you choose with à la carte dining, or relax with room service when available*
- A professional Travel Director as your personal concierge
- Local sightseeing with professional English-speaking guides with unparalleled knowledge, including entrance fees for places visited
- Active participation and up-close encounters to experience the cultures of your journey
- Bottled water, soft drinks, coffee and tea included with meals; bottled water during sightseeing excursions
- All gratuities to hotel and restaurant staff and local guides and drivers
- Group or individual airport transfers on arrival and departure flights
- The *TravcoAssist Travel Protection Plan*, including emergency medical evacuation insurance coverage for injury or illness, and 24-hour Worldwide Live Travel Assistance through Travel Guard Assistance

**Due to remote or undeveloped locations on some journeys, accommodations may not always meet Western standards. Dine-Around opportunities will be limited in remote or unsecured locations.*

THE COST OF YOUR JOURNEY DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- Air transportation; airport taxes; passport expenses
- Inoculations and medications
- Visas if required
- Alcoholic beverages (except as noted in itinerary) and caviar
- Expenses of guides, buses or cars for sightseeing not included in the itinerary
- Laundry, expenses of a personal nature and gratuity for any personal services
- Health, accident, baggage and trip cancellation insurance
- Excessive baggage charges imposed by airlines
- TravcoAssist GOLD Protection (*optional additional coverage*)
- Customary end-of-the-trip gratuity to the Travel Director
(Depending on your satisfaction with their services, \$15-\$18 per person, per day is customary.)