Possessing a rare and unique collection of attributes, Israel’s exceedingly rich diversity of religious and sacred landmarks represents three of the world’s greatest religious movements: Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Israel is an incredible living museum, where travelers follow in the footsteps of kings and prophets, heroes and idealists, encountering famously historic sites around nearly every corner. For lovers of archeology, history, unique architectural styles and ancient cultures, Israel is a true treasure. Indeed, it has the highest number of museums per capita in the world. But this small, dynamic country offers even more such as distinctive fine arts, boutique wineries, sandy beaches, Dead Sea resorts and mountaintop spa hotels on Mount Carmel and the Galilee Mountains. Travelers can explore biblical cities, ride camels into the desert, meet nomadic Bedouins and visit a kibbutz.

It is no wonder that travelers have been drawn here for millennia.
Suggested Itinerary

Day 1: Tel Aviv, Israel
This city features the largest concentration of Modernist-style buildings found anywhere.

Day 2: Tel Aviv / Caesarea / Mediterranean Coast / Haifa / Mt Carmel / Tiberias
From Caesarea’s Roman amphitheater to coastal Haifa to Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee, these ancient settlements provide a dramatic range of historical perspectives.

Day 3: Tiberias / Galilee / Safed / Golan Heights
Tiberias and Safed are two of Judaism’s Four Holy Cities. The surrounding region offers stunning historical and biblical sites dating back 3,000 years.

Day 4: Tiberias / Sea of Galilee / Nazareth / Jordan Valley / Jerusalem
Nazareth’s many Christian shrines make it a popular pilgrimage center.

Day 5: Jerusalem
Israel’s capital dates back to the fourth millennium BC, making it one of the world’s oldest cities.

Day 6: Jerusalem / Qumran / Dead Sea / Masada
The Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered near Qumran; and Masada has spellbinding tales to tell.

Day 7: Jerusalem / Tel Aviv / Depart

Custom Tour Options

Beit Shean & Jezreel Valley (2 days)
Many battles were fought for control of this valley, which was settled as far back as sixth or fifth millennia BC.

Dead Sea (3 days)
Explore the region of the Dead Sea, including the Negev Desert and the ancient “lost” cities along the Spice Route.

Eilat With Petra, Jordan (3 days)
This satisfying combination takes in the exquisite Rose City of Petra as well as the Red Sea.

Judean Hills (1 day)
This mountain range is home to Jerusalem and several other biblical cities as well as Nahal Sorek National Park.

Tel Aviv & Jaffa (2 days)
Tel Aviv is a modern port and the richest city in Israel and Jaffa features the old port, artist galleries and more.

About Israel

Beit Shean & Jezreel Valley: Several biblical cities are located in the valley, including Beit She’an. The city is historically significant due to its location at the junction of the Jordan River Valley and the Jezreel Valley, which essentially granted it controlling access from the interior to the coast and from Jerusalem to the Galilee. Here, Israel’s first king, Saul, and his sons died. Canaanite graves dating from 2000 to 1600 BC were discovered in 1926. The fertile valley is covered with fields of wheat, cotton, sunflowers and corn and grazing lands for sheep and cattle.

Caesarea: The ancient city of Caesarea is known for its ancient ruins such as the restored Roman amphitheater and the remains of the hippodrome, which may have held up to 20,000. The harbor was built by the Phoenicians in the fourth century BC. The Byzantine street of shops is captivating, and beyond that is the Crusader city, which was once protected by stout walls and bastions surrounded by a deep moat. In the fortified center are the ruins of an ancient aqueduct, the Herodian Temple of Augustus and the Crusader cathedral, once a Byzantine monastic church.

Dead Sea: The Dead Sea is actually a lake that is 8.6 times as salty as the ocean, making it uninhabitable for marine life. It is shared with Jordan, the West Bank and Israel. It has drawn visitors from around the Mediterranean for thousands of years. It served as a refuge for King David, and became one of the world’s first health resorts for Herod the Great. Many believe its waters and hot springs have healing powers.

Eilat: At the northern tip of the Red Sea, this is Israel’s southernmost city and a busy port. It is also a popular resort. Its arid desert climate is moderated by its closeness to the sea. This is the world’s northernmost tropical sea and has 1,000 invertebrate species and 200 varieties of soft and hard coral. Although Eilat has been inhabited since 8,000 BC, only about seven percent of the area has undergone detailed archaeological surveys, even though some 1,500 ancient sites have been identified. It is also a good spot to explore the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Jordan’s fabled Petra, the 2,000-year-old, rock-carved city.

Golan Heights: Golan Heights is the Gamla, Sa’ar and the Banias waterfalls. In spring, the ground is covered with wildflowers. Mount Hermon, 2,284 meters / 7,493 feet high, is in the northernmost point of the Golan Heights. A cable car runs up the mountain, offering stunning scenery in the summer and skiing in the winter. Nimrod Fortress is a 13th-century fortress in the northern Golan Heights, built by Muslim rulers to defend against a Crusader attack. It is located on a steep mountain ridge with deep ravines on the sides and a trail leading downhill to Banias National Park.

Haifa: A major seaport on the Mediterranean coast, Haifa is the third largest city in the country with a mixture of Jews and Arabs. On the slopes of Mount Carmel, Haifa’s history dates to biblical times. The earliest settlement in the vicinity was a small port city dating back to the Late Bronze Age. Haifa was once known as a dye-making center. The city has been under the control of many groups — Arabs, Byzantines, Crusaders, Ottomans, Egyptians and British.

Jerusalem: Israel’s capital, Jerusalem sits in the Judean Mountains between the Mediterranean and the northern tip of the Dead Sea. Modern Jerusalem is the holiest city in Judaism; the third holiest city in Islam; and is host to a significant number of Christian sites. The compact old city includes Temple Mount, the Western Wall, Church of the Holy Sepulcher, Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque. The walled city has been traditionally divided into four quarters: Armenian, Christian, Jewish and Muslim. The wonderful market offers an array of goods such as Armenian-style decorated ceramics, beautiful strings of beads, authentic clothing, colorful wool carpets and amazing glassware. The promenade atop the old city walls offers great views of the entire area. Jerusalem is also known for its historically significant museums such as the Israel Museum, Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Rockefeller Archeological Museum.
Judean Hills: This mountain range encompasses West and East Jerusalem, Hebron, Bethlehem and Ramallah. The range has karst topography, including a stalactite cave in Nahal Sorek National Park. Nahal Sorek is mentioned in the Bible’s Book of Judges as the border between the ancient Philistines and the Tribe of Dan of the ancient Israelites. Known in Arabic as Wadi Surar, it is also said to be where Sampson met Delilah for the first time and where she enticed him to tell her the secret of his strength. The mountains form a division between the western Shephelah coastal plains and the eastern Jordan Rift Valley.

Masada: Atop an isolated rock plateau overlooking the Dead Sea, Masada’s dramatic setting is compelling as is its history. Travelers can hike up the Snake Path on the eastern side of the mountain, or take a cable car ride to the top. Due to its remoteness and arid environment, the site has remained largely untouched during the past two millennia. The Roman ramp still stands on the western side and can be climbed on foot. Many of the buildings have been restored as well as wall paintings of Herod’s two main palaces, and Roman-style bathhouses. The synagogue, storerooms, and houses of the Jewish rebels have also been identified and restored.

Nazareth: Nazareth is the capital and largest city in the North District. Its population is primarily Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel. It was described in the New Testament as the childhood home of Jesus. That makes the city and its many Christian shrines a center for Christian pilgrimage.

Qumran: This archaeological site in the West Bank is set on a dry plateau a short distance inland from the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea, near the Israeli settlement and kibbutz of Kalia. The Hellenistic period settlement remained occupied until the Romans destroyed it in about 68 AD. It is best known as the settlement nearest to the caves where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered.

Safed: In the Northern District at an elevation of 900 meters / 2,953 feet, Safed is the highest city in the Galilee. It has warm summers and cold, often snowy, winters. Since the 16th century, it has been considered one of Judaism’s four holy cities, along with Jerusalem, Hebron and Tiberias. It is a center of Kabbalah, Jewish mysticism.

Sea Of Galilee: The sea is actually a lake, the largest freshwater lake in Israel. It has a total area of 166 square kilometers / 64 square miles with a maximum depth of some 43 meters / 141 feet. It also claims the record as the lowest freshwater lake on earth. The Jordan River flows through it from north to south. It is closely tied with the life of Jesus, who is said to have delivered his Sermon on the Mount from a hill overlooking the lake, which is also believed to be the site of his walking on water and other miracles.

Tel Aviv & Jaffa: On the coast of the Mediterranean, the city was founded in 1909 on the outskirts of the old port city of Jaffa, which it quickly outgrew. The cities joined together in 1950, making it the second largest city in Israel. Tel Aviv’s White City is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and features the largest concentration of modernist, Bauhaus architecture found anywhere. Tel Aviv with its modern port is an economic engine and the richest city in Israel, which equates to an abundance of cafés, restaurants and upscale shopping. It is also a major performing arts center. It is ranked as the 17th most expensive city in the world. “The Tachana,” first train station of Tel Aviv, Rabin Square, Palmach Museum and Diaspora Museum are all here. Jaffa features the old port and artist galleries, shops and more.

Tiberias: On the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, Tiberias was established nearly 2,000 years ago by Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great. A legend states that this was built on the site of the village of Rakkat, mentioned in the Book of Joshua. Between the second and tenth centuries, it was the largest Jewish city in Galilee, and the political and religious hub of the Jews of Palestine. Jesus is said to have performed miracles in the district, making it an important pilgrimage site. It has long been recognized for its hot springs, believed to have curative powers. The region has many sites dating back 3,000 years.

Best Time To Go
Generally, Israel enjoys long, warm dry summers April to October, and mild winters November to March, with drier, cooler weather in hill regions such as Jerusalem and Safed. Regional conditions vary considerably. The coast has humid summers and mild winters. Hill regions have dry summers and moderately cold winters. In the Jordan valley summers are hot and dry with pleasant winters. Rainfall can be heavy in the north and center of the country much less in the northern Negev and almost none in the south. The best time to come is during spring and fall.

Note: Saturday is the Jewish day of rest. Public transport and businesses are closed.

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