



## Travel Guidelines & Conditions

Please Read and Sign Application

### VISA AND PASSPORTS

Travel outside of the United States requires a passport **valid for at least 6 months beyond April 30, 2023**. **No** visas are required for entrance to Israel.

### FLIGHTS - WE'RE NOT OFFERING A GROUP FLIGHT ON THIS TOUR FOR MULTIPLE REASONS.

1. We use an Israeli based tour company and they do not offer group flight bookings. We use Sar El Tours because we have found them far more economical and professional than other tour companies.
2. We have participants coming from all over the continental United States and other Nations. It would be logistically difficult to offer group flight options.
3. It's actually more economical for participants to book their flights on their own.
4. If you're unsure of how to book airfare accurately we suggest using a travel agent or someone who is knowledgeable in securing airfare. I will suggest flight options when your application is received and can help assist you if needed.
5. Use google flight search engine to research flight times and prices but **ALWAYS** go directly to the Airlines website to book directly from them.
  - \* Do **not book through** Priceline or Expedia because if something happens that you need to change your flight or cancel you'll have a FAR better chance booking with the airline.
  - \* Since covid, most U.S. airlines (Delta, United, American) have been better about changing flights without a big hit financially. Foreign based airlines might be different. Always inquire about their policies concerning flight changes and cancellation before booking through any airlines.

### ARRIVAL TIME INTO ISRAEL - Very Important - Arrival time is an 8 hour window on Wed. April 19th

1. You will **need to depart on April 18th** to arrive in Israel **on April 19th**. Israel is 7 hours ahead of eastern standard time.
2. You need to arrive somewhere between **8 a.m. & 5 pm.** to catch one of our bus transfers up to our Hotel in Haifa. We receive 2 bus transfers from the tour company and they will probably be at **11 a.m. & 6 p.m.** depending on the majority of flight times.
3. You can arrive earlier than 8 a.m. but you will have more wait time at the airport. Arriving early is far **better than** arriving **late!**
4. I know when booking flights you want to get the best deal, but if you cannot hit the suggested timeframe it may cost you more in the long run.
5. If you absolutely cannot make it in that timeframe (8 a.m. - 5 p.m.) there are a couple options but it will cost you more money.
  - \* Israel offers shared taxis called **Sherut**. They run from the airport up to Haifa but cost about \$80 per person. You also have to wait until the van is full to depart, so it can take up to an hour before departing.
  - \* Another option is to fly to Israel a day early and stay at a hotel near the Tel Aviv airport that offers free airport transportation.

## DEPARTURE TIME HOME FROM ISRAEL - Very Important

Our last night in a hotel is **Sunday April 30th** - Checking Out Monday **May 1st** around 10 AM

### You have a couple options on traveling home

1. You can book a flight home anytime on **May 1st** - during that day we will check out and go to a couple historical points of interest and arrive at the airport **around 6PM**.
2. If you get a better deal on flights by leaving at an earlier time it's okay to leave earlier. There is easy transportation from Jerusalem to the airport via a **Sherut** (shared taxi ride) cost is **\$25**
3. **Watch** your **dates** on flights home for example many flights departing to the USA tend to leave after midnight. So a 1AM flight on May 1st you would need to be at the airport 4 hours before (Israeli Rules) the flight at 9 PM April 30th.
4. Another example - a 1AM flight on May 2nd you would need to be at the airport 4 hours before the flight at 9 PM May 1st.

## HEALTH CONCERNS WHEN TRAVELING - TRAVEL & MEDICAL INSURANCE

To be sure you're travel worthy; you might want to speak to your doctor before your departure. We strongly suggest purchasing appropriate trip insurance covering medical, baggage and trip cancellation as needed. Below are two options but check on your own for that which meets your needs.

- [www.travelguard.com](http://www.travelguard.com) 1-800-826-4919
- [www.sevencorners.com](http://www.sevencorners.com) 1-800-335-0611

**Medical Only Trip Insurance** is **Highly recommended**, and very reasonable. Check with your healthcare provider but here is one that was highly recommended to us. I purchased 3 weeks of international coverage for \$111.00 - zero deductible

<https://www.geoblutripinsurance.com/purchase/short-term/application-startup.cfm>

Below is a Medical Only Trip Insurance that is based in Israel. We have been informed that if you have a medical emergency sometimes it is far easier if you have an Israeli based medical coverage.

- <http://www.chacoty.co.il/e/InsuranceinIsrael/Insurancefortourists/tabid/93/language/en-US/Default.aspx>
- You **do not** need shots or vaccinations to visit Israel. However, should you need any medications, be sure to carry it with you.

## ISRAEL CURRENCY AND BANK INFORMATION

The currency in Israel is the shekel (or New Israel Shekel – NIS). Right now, the exchange rate is approximately 3.4 NIS – \$1 USD. Since you will only be responsible for (lunch) one light meal a day, you will only need enough shekels for those meals, snacks and any shopping you may wish to do – assume that the miscellaneous expenses for the trip may run approximately \$300-\$400 depending on your personal spending habits. **Lunch is generally around \$15-18 depending on how much you may want to eat.** Remember we will have a buffet breakfast and dinner meal every day. The only day that is different will be **our last day May 1st you will be responsible for Lunch & Dinner.**

## BRING CASH FOR TIPS, OFFERINGS AND SPENDING MONEY

**PLEASE BRING at least \$70 IN CASH** to cover the tips/gratuities for the **tour guide** and **bus driver**. Through our tour fee of **\$3,050**, we will cover \$100 of the suggested **\$180 tip**/gratuities recommendations. This will cover the hotel wait staff, bell-boys, maids, ect. It will also cover **HALF** of the recommended tip of \$7 a day for guide and \$5 a day for driver per participant. We will receive an offering/tip for our guides & bus drivers.

### We do this for 3 reasons

- #1 At the end of our 12 day journey you will feel very close to them and will want to bless them.
- #2 I've been told by our previous guide that they lose a portion at the bank with cashing USA checks?
- #3 The tour company has asked me to pay them in cash if possible, but with such a large group (100+) I don't feel comfortable carrying that amount of cash (\$70 x 100 Participants = \$7,000) on my person. **Please save at-least \$70 to contribute** towards our **guides** and **bus drivers**. We will collect it on the last day of our journey and pray for them before we depart.
- \* There is **NO NEED** to **TIP Bell Boys** - Dining Room **Waiters/Waitresses** - Hotel Employees - **Maids** - ect - **I will cover** all **those tips** through your Tour Fee of \$3,050
- \* **Please** consider bringing some additional **cash** to bless some of the **ministries** we will visit and participate with in Israel.

### ISRAEL CURRENCY AND BANK INFORMATION

The currency in Israel is the New Israeli Shekel (NIS). Each shekel is divided into 100 'agurot' (singular 'agura'). NIS bills are in denominations of 200, 100, 50 and 20 shekels. Coins are in denominations of 1, 2, 5 and 10 shekels, and 50 and 10 agurot. One may bring an unlimited amount of local and foreign currency into Israel in cash, travelers' checks, letters of credit and State of Israel Bonds. Foreign currency may be exchanged at any bank and at many hotels, yet watch the rate of exchange.

- **SUGGESTION:** The most convenient way to obtain currency is **through your bank before** you **travel**.
  - Bank ATM machines which may be found are all over Israel. Enter your 4-digit numeric pin number and receive shekels debited in U.S. dollars to your account. The exchange rates are fine at the local banks. The only **problem** with this is many times our tours are very **busy** and there is **NOT enough time** for everyone to wait at an ATM or bank.
  - Many stores take US currency (The one dollar bills can be used to purchase items such as bottled water and soft drinks.) You can exchange dollar bills into local currency at airports, hotels, and banks. Whenever you exchange dollars, keep the receipt given to you. You will then be able to convert any remaining currency back into dollars when you leave the country. Most stores love U.S. dollars, but you can sometimes get better bargains if you pay in the local currency.
  - **Carry** and **guard** your **passport** (**@ALL TIMES you must have your Passport**)  
Guard your pocketbook, purse, and other valuables very carefully. You can keep your valuables in the safe at the hotel. Never leave them in your hotel room or luggage.
- Purchases
- can be made with major credit cards; however, do not take unnecessary credit cards.
- What taxes can I expect to pay in Israel? The Vat (Value Added Tax) in Israel is 18%. It's already included in most prices in Israel. VAT is waived for tourists at hotels, tour companies and car rental agencies. Like in Europe and elsewhere, tourists can receive a refund of the VAT they paid on purchases when departing the country, the refund program and the purchase amount in one tax invoice including V.A.T. must exceed ILS. 400.

### CREDIT CARD USERS

Inform your credit card offices of the dates that you will be out of the country and that you may be using your credit card in Israel, and/or during travel (including airport stops). Unusual activity is a sign of a breach of security. If the credit card company is not aware of your plans, in order to protect you, they may suspend your card automatically.

## **BAGGAGE**

**Most** transatlantic flights allow one (1) checked piece of luggage per person and one (1) carry-on bag. **Please come with the least amount of luggage possible**, there is limited space available on the bus for luggage. **Luggage is limited to ONE primary travel bag and one small soft day-bag.** We usually have a full bus of 50+ participants. If each participant brings 2 pieces of luggage we will be beyond the capacity of the luggage storage area under the bus. You will receive a FREE medium size backpack from the tour company the day you arrive. **A Small Collapsible Nylon Duffel bag** is a good option as a carry-on item. It would enable you to have a few changes of clothes, medications, and key personal items on hand and then be able to fold up and fit into a larger suitcase.

## **WEIGHT**

Most airlines will only allow a maximum weight of **50 pounds** for your checked bag. **Do not over-pack.** You will be charged extra by the airline for overweight baggage but **MAKE SURE** to check **your airline** for their baggage policy.

### **Overweight:**

- Bags over 50 lbs are overweight.
- Most airlines charge extra fees for bags from 51 - 70 lbs

### **Oversize**

- Dimensions between 62 - 126 in (height + width + length) are oversize. - **Please Check Your Airline!**
- When you're trying to figure out if your bag is oversize, add the measurements for length, height and width together.

### **Carry-on allowance**

You're allowed 1 carry-on bag and 1 personal item.

- Your carry-on bag can be up to 45 inches (22 x 14 x 9 in) including handles and wheels.
- Your personal item needs to be smaller than your carry-on item and must fit under the seat in front of you.
- Instead of a carry-on bag, you can bring on a soft-sided garment bag up to 51 inches.

### **TSA carry-on restrictions**

For information on traveling with liquids, knitting needles or other items, please check with TSA.

- [tsa.gov](http://tsa.gov)

## **AIRPORT SECURITY LEAVING THE U.S.**

Security checks are routinely carried out for your protection and safety. Expect to be asked about the contents of your luggage – whether you packed your bags yourself and were they in a supervised place before reaching the airport. Do not take any mail, packages or unknown items from anyone before or after arriving at the airport.

## **WHAT TO PACK**

- Sunscreen and insect repellent are useful items as well.
- Water bottle – it's a dry country and you should be drinking regularly.
- **The dress in Israel is casual.** Most people wear jeans, slacks and capri pants on the trip. No spaghetti strap blouses for women. **Pack water shoes for Hezekiah's tunnel?**
- Even the congregation services are very casual.
- **Carry a "modesty kit" for visiting holy sites** or traveling in Arab or conservative Jewish areas, for instance, when visiting the Western Wall, it is mandatory for a female to wear a scarf in order to gain access. No "dress-up" clothes are needed. Casual wear is customary and more practical. Shorts are OK. No short-shorts please. Because we will be visiting "holy sites" there will be times when you (men and women) must dress more modestly (shoulders and knees covered). Portable "slip-over" or "wrap-around" or "zip-on" clothing is best for such occasions. This is your "Modesty Kit". If you are wearing shorts, sleeveless tops or low necklines be prepared to use your Modesty Kit to enter certain religious sites having clothing regulations. (*Holy sites are usually churches, Temple Mount, Western Wall*)

- **SUGGESTION:** Unfortunately, luggage occasionally gets lost or misplaced. Pack a light gym bag or backpack as a carry-on bag that includes some necessities for a few days -- a change of clothes, all medications, spare contact lenses or glasses, all forms of money and any important documents.
- **WALKING SHOES:** Wear comfortable walking shoes with “deep treads” as your primary footwear. Trekking tennis shoes or light-weight hiking shoes do well. Avoid heels, dress shoes, or street shoes. Traction is more important than fashion. The land of Israel is not smooth under foot and many trails are covered with rock or gravel. If you are not walking uphill, you will be walking downhill or side hill. Your shoes should be suited for open terrain walking and light hiking. Flip-flops are not recommended as footwear during touring activities.
- **SUN HAT:** The month of April can be very warm in Israel. The heat index can reach over 100 F in some places we will visit. It is important for you to manage the heat and the sun’s intensity to avoid heat stress, which is very common in Israel. A hat providing ample shade is a must. Other sun items to consider are sunglasses, chap-stick and sunscreen.

**SUGGESTED CLOTHING LIST:** There is no single list of clothing articles that can meet the needs of everyone. However, the list below can offer you some assistance on what would be appropriate to bring.

- 1-2 pairs of long casual pants or jeans. — 3-4 pair of shorts (no short-shorts)
  - 1 light jacket, sweater or sweatshirt. - 7-8 days of shirts/blouses
  - 12 days of socks — 12 days of undergarments
  - 1 pair comfortable trekking shoes - 1 pair water-shoes, sandals or flip-flops (in water use)
  - Swim suit (one-piece swimsuit please; cultural sensitivity)
  - **Facial washcloths** as needed (not available in all hotels)
  - Personal toiletry and medical item — Sun hat providing ample shade (required)
  - **Electrical plug adapter(s)** as needed for your personal electrical items
  - In Jerusalem our hotel can send out your clothes for cleaning and have them returned to you the next day. Expect an average of \$3-\$4 per major item and \$1-\$2 for minor items. Please be aware that you are at times required to manage and transport your own luggage.
- **TOILETRIES:** In Israel, most of the same products they sell in America are available, although they are at a substantially higher cost:
    - Shampoo/Conditioner - Soap - Toothbrush/Toothpaste - Deodorant - Shaving Equipment
    - Tampons/pads. - Tylenol/ Ibuprofen - Anti-bacterial hand lotion
    - Eyeglasses/ contact lenses - **extra pair of eyeglasses in case broken**
    - Topical antibiotic ointment - Tissue Packs

## **ELECTRONIC APPLIANCES IN ISRAEL**

Electric current in Israel is 220-volt A.C., single phase, 50 cycle which **requires special adapter** plugs with round prongs. If you intend to take appliances (hair dryer, electric razor, iron, hot water coils for tea) that are suitable for both 110 and 220 volts, make sure to carry a set of adapter plugs. If your appliance is for 110-volt only, you will also need a converter. Never plug your 110-volt appliance into a 220-volt outlet without a converter; it will work at twice its speed for a few seconds - and never work again!

## **ARRIVAL INTO ISRAEL AND HOTEL TRANSFERS - BORDER PROCEDURES - PASSPORT CONTROL**

When you **arrive** in **Israel** and exit your plane you will follow the crowd and walk towards the end of the terminal wing of gates and there will be machines that you stand in front of and scan your passport. It will print a **temporary Travel ID card** (visa) for Israel. **Do NOT LOSE this**, keep in a safe place with your **passport**.

Follow the signs and crowd to the **Customs Station**. They will ask you **WHY** you are in Israel and **WHERE** you are staying? Tell the customs agent that you are traveling with a large Christian group for 12 days and your first 3 nights will be at the **Leonardo Hotel in Haifa**. After the Customs Station you will scan your temporary Travel ID card.

Then you will proceed to baggage claim to retrieve your luggage. Look at large display for your flight and baggage carousel #.

From there you will proceed through the doors at the far end of baggage claim into the reception area where a representative from Sar El Tours will meet us at a scheduled pick up time.

Our representative will lead the group to the bus where our guide and driver will be waiting for us.

**For travelers arriving in Israel at an earlier date**, you must arrange for a private transfer, or, take a local taxi or shared 'sherut' to your destination.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Our tour company uses modern air-conditioned motor coaches. **Smoking is never permitted** while on board the motor coach.

## **TIME DIFFERENCE IN ISRAEL**

Israeli Standard Time is seven hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time, U.S.A.

## **TELEPHONE USAGE IN ISRAEL**

If you are planning to use a cell phone in Israel purchased in the United States, make sure to check with your provider before you leave to be sure the phone will work in Israel. You may also need to pay extra for an international calling plan. Also there is an option to purchase an Israeli sim card for your phone. Research your options ahead of time through your cell phone provider and tripadvisor.com has good information for international travelers.

## **POSTAL SERVICE**

Stamps, envelopes, picture postcards and greeting cards may be easily purchased at your hotels and local post office. The post office sells phone calling cards and can help with money transfers as well. Please note that post offices are closed on Shabbat and major holidays.

## **DEPARTING ISRAEL VIA BEN GURION INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

**If you're departing on a different day than the majority of the group** -Airline Check-In: Passengers must check in at Ben Gurion International Airport at least four hours prior to departure time.

## **AIRPORT SECURITY**

Security checks are carried out routinely for your protection and safety. Expect to be asked about the contents of your luggage – was it packed by you and in a supervised place before reaching the airport. Do not take any mail, packages or unknown items from anyone either before or after arriving at the airport.

## **DON'T FORGET**

- Please make certain that you have **a valid passport**. **KEEP IT ON YOUR PERSON AT ALL TIMES!**
- **We HIGHLY recommend** that you keep a **photocopy of your passport** in your purse or wallet. (keep one in your suitcase, one in your backpack)
- Please **pack medications in your carry-on bag** and **NOT** your **checked luggage**.
- Never leave your passport, valuables or money in your hotel room, unless placed in the safe.
- **Water Bottle** - You will carry your water daily. You can fill it at the hotel and save money or purchase water from your bus driver or grocery store.
- **Please** plan on drinking a lot of liquid (water) on the plane. The flight is long so you will want to maintain hydration.

## **Miscellaneous**

- Please **bring money** for lunches, bottled water, laundry, telephone calling cards, souvenirs and all other personal expenses.
- Consider bringing a generous supply of **\$\$ small bills** to use for street vendors.

- Bring your Bibles, journals and other reading materials for the tour and airplane flights.
- A money belt that fits under your clothing is recommended.
- **Non-perishable snacks** - Highly recommended for various reasons (they're costly in Israel, if you rather not eat lunch, don't like the food!)
- For those with sensitive digestive systems we suggest considering bringing - Imodium -D (your system may react to the new foods) also PRILLOSEC (omeprazole) for heartburn
- **Bring a washcloth (it's not available/customary in many hotels)**
- Consider bringing a zip-lock bag of powder Laundry detergent (quick wash - small items)