

Frequently Asked Questions

- Is it safe?
 - Absolutely! If you make it to the airport, you've made through the most dangerous part of the trip.
- How much does it cost?
 - Estimated price is \$4,500 per person (based on two per room). This includes land tour, airfare, breakfast & dinner, speakers, guides, etc. *This does not cover: Travel Insurance, Lunch, & Souvenirs. (If interested about single room supplement please inquire to Gerad.)
- What will the weather be like?
 - Jerusalem in May: Historical Average High is 80°F and Low is 56°F; Tel Aviv in May: Historical Average High is 81°F and Low is 62°F. (Keep in mind the temperatures can easily reach the 90°F on any given day in May.)
- What will the food be like?
 - Hotel buffets include a variety of fruits, vegetables, salads, olives, hummus, and falafel, as well as meat dishes such as chicken, beef, and fish. All water from the tap is safe to drink. There will be bottled water on the bus to purchase for \$1. Please work to stay hydrated.
- What should I do about taking my nice camera along?
 - The tour guide will indicate when it is inappropriate to take photos. Please remember that if you do decide to take pictures that you should wait until after we've done our teaching and explanation time.
- How do I dress appropriately?
 - On days when modest dress is required we'll give you a heads up. The rule of thumb is to have shoulders and knees covered. Ladies, it is recommended that you acquire two lightweight scarves that can be draped over your shoulder and wrapped around your waist. (Normally available at Walmart)
- Will I be able to do laundry?
 - Yes, laundry options vary from trip to trip, but there are usually 2-3 opportunities to have your clothes laundered for a small fee.
- What do we do in the evenings?
 - You are free to explore at your level of comfort once scheduled activities are completed for the day. Please remember that we will have a 6am wake-up call followed by breakfast.
- What should I expect for lunch?
 - We'll be stopping along the way each day at a convenient location. Please let us know ahead of time of any dietary needs you have. Please plan to spend anywhere approximately \$15 for lunch. Some days it will be as cheap as \$10 and other days as expensive as \$20.
- Will I be able to shop?
 - Absolutely, but it will be limited. If you have a special item in mind that you'd like to purchase please let the tour guide know on the first day and we'll make sure you have a good opportunity to do so. Please do not barter at window fronts. However, markets

like in the Old City of Jerusalem it is acceptable. There are a handful of shops that we'll encourage shopping at towards the end of the trip in Bethlehem and Jerusalem.

- What should I do with my valuables?
 - Only bring a laptop if you really need to. For the most part it won't be necessary. The majority of the hotel rooms we stay in will have a small safe that you can lock valuables in like a passport.
- Do I need to bring cash or a credit card?
 - Yes! American currency will be great for the majority of shops and places we eat lunch, but expect to get shekels in return. Please check with your credit card company on international charges. If they do have charges, kindly ask if they will waive it for this trip. If they won't waive it then you can call Capital One and ask for a card with no international fees and no annual fee.
- What types of shoes should I wear?
 - Good walking shoes for the majority of the trip whether are sneakers or hiking sandals. Flip flops or dressy sandals will most likely be very uncomfortable for the amount of walking and standing, but flip-flops will be excellent for Mediterranean Sea, Baptisms, and the Dead Sea. Please keep in mind that a water shoe is ideal for Hezekiah's tunnel and a completely enclosed shoe like a sneaker is 100% necessary to take part in the archaeological dig. (A small flashlight or head lamp would be helpful too.)
- Should I get travel insurance?
 - The minimum Travel insurance that is required is for medical emergencies and Covid-19. Check with your health insurance provider as they may already include international health coverage (though travel insurance covers items like flight delays/cancellations and lost luggage). Check with employers, credit card companies, organizations you serve with, etc. There are a myriad of ways that people acquire travel insurance. Our Travel company recommends Allianz Travel. Another option is InsureMyTrip.com.
- What do I need to plug my devices in?
 - Adapters are very cheap via Amazon.
- How do I communicate to people back home?
 - We'll have wifi in a lot of places so apps like Facebook Messenger or WhatsApp work great for phone calls and/or texting.
 - For those of you who have family members who tend to worry, here our phone numbers that people can use to get a hold of us in case of very urgent situations:
 - Gerad - [563-362-2095](tel:563-362-2095) (gerad.hall@gmail.com)
- What if I need to have a cane or a portable seat?
 - These are some options that have been researched by past Israel tour participants available on Amazon: Camping Seat & Collapsible Hiking Stick
- What if I see someone with a gun?
 - Smile and wave! The Israeli Defense Force (IDF) is very present in Israel and it is not uncommon for them to be carrying automatic weapons.
- Should I bring a Bible or a notebook?
 - Please bring a small Bible that is easy to travel with and/or put in your pocket. You will be provided with a bounded journal designed to take notes in for the various sites we visit along with photos, maps, charts, and journal space to help you capture your trip.

- How do I handle the time change?
 - There is an 8hr difference between Israel and Central Time. You will want to bring a sleep-aid to help ensure that you sleep on the plane and the first few nights in Israel. Please consult with your physician for an option as well.
- How can I continue to prepare for the trip?
 - If you would like to receive additional notes from Gerard's class please email him at gerad.hall@gmail.com.
 - If you haven't already, please start spending some time walking each day. Break in a good pair of walking shoes or sandals. Start at a mile and try to work up to 3-4 miles a day over the next 6 weeks. Don't worry about speed, but add in a few flights of stairs.
- How should I pack? (Some of this is repeated from above)
 - First, if you are concerned about space try rolling your clothes (Excellent tutorials on Youtube).
 - Most days you'll want to be comfortable to walk and be outside in warm temperatures. Dress is almost exclusively casual. With that being said, here are a few pointers on shoes, shirts, modesty, swimwear, etc:
 - Shoes: Good walking shoes (if you buy new ones be sure to break them in before Israel to avoid potential blisters) or hiking sandals, one pair of closed toe shoes (for Archaeological dig), water shoes (Hezekiah's Tunnel), and optional flip flops for beach or pool.
 - Modest clothing: Some sites (particularly Catholic ones) will require that clothes are modest (knees and shoulders covered). For men it is recommendable to buy shorts that cover the knee or to bring hiking pants that zip off at the knee. This will keep you comfortable in the warm weather and make modesty easily accessible. T-shirts are generally acceptable, please be careful that if you are wearing a printed t-shirt that the messages are not overtly Christian, American, or anything else that could possibly draw unnecessary attention.
 - For women, it is recommended to bring either a wrap around skirt that can be tied over a pair of shorts or to bring a pashmina scarf that is long enough to tie around waist and cover your knees. It is also helpful to have a lightweight komona scarf to drape over your shoulders. Please avoid spaghetti strap tops. Please avoid shorts that are shorter than your finger tips with your arms at your sides.
 - Swimwear: You'll at least want to bring it for the Dead Sea. Swim trunks for men and one piece bathing suit for ladies.
 - There will be opportunity in Jerusalem to have clothes laundered, but we would encourage you to bring enough undergarments for the duration of the entire trip.
- What are my luggage options?
 - Each person will be allowed one carry-on and one checked baggage for flights. The size of these vary depending on the airline, but the following will give you an approximate idea:
 - Average weights for carry-on baggage weight is 17lbs
 - Average weights for checked baggage weight is 50lbs
 - Average carry-on dimensions are 21"(H)x15"(W)x9"(D) (All numbers rounded down from CM)
 - Average checked baggage dimensions are 62.2 inches total
- What is okay to have in my carry-on?

- Prescription medication is a really good idea. Multi-tools and trimmers are not. We'll go through multiple checkpoints even in Israel and if these items are on you when going through you will lose them permanently and that would be very unfortunate.
- When arriving at O'Hare airport, where will we meet up?
 - We will meet at Terminal 5 (International Terminal). The group will go through the process of checking in and through the airports all together. Everything is easier as a group (which I understand is abnormal). The tour guide will be waiting in Tel Aviv!
- What questions will I be asked when I go through Customs and how should I respond?
 - What is the purpose of your visit? Tourism
 - Is this an organized tour? Yes
 - Do you have an itinerary and where will you be going? Yes, we'll be going to places like Caesarea and Sea of Galilee (Don't mention anything in the West Bank).
 - What tour company are you going with? Shores Tours
 - Who's in charge of your group? Point to pastor