



TIPS FOR TRAVELERS

CLOTHING

The attire in Israel is usually informal. (You will have no real dress-up occasions, even for Sunday.) For touring, plan on wearing comfortable clothes. You may wear jeans and casual slacks on the trip. **No shorts are allowed on this tour. Also, tank tops, cutoff shirts, or sleeveless blouses are not permitted.** Dresses for ladies and jackets and ties for men are optional for evening wear but are not required. Take one jacket or heavy sweater, even during the summer months.

Remember when packing: **Less is better.** Comfortable shoes with nonskid soles are necessary. You will be doing a great deal of walking, often over uneven terrain and smooth stones. Wash-and-wear items are very helpful.

CURRENCY

Extra expenses may include incidental food items such as carbonated beverages, snacks, and bottled water (water is available on the bus for \$1.00). You will also want to bring money to purchase souvenirs. Of that amount, you should carry at least \$25.00 in one dollar bills with the rest in cash or U.S. traveler's checks. (The one dollar bills can be used to purchase items such as bottled water, soft drinks, and postcards.) You can exchange dollars into the 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 the best exchange rate if you pay using a major credit card.

The basic unit of money in Israel is the New Israeli Shekel (NIS) which is divided into one hundred Agorot.

You should consider the use of a money belt. Clever pickpockets are waiting for you. Carry and guard your passport, pocketbook, purse, and other valuables very carefully. Keep your money, traveler's checks, and passport on your person or in your hotel safe deposit box. Never pack them in your luggage or leave them in your hotel room. Larger purchases can be made using a major credit card, but go through your wallet or purse before leaving the United States to remove all unnecessary credit cards (just in case your wallet is lost or stolen).

ELECTRIC APPLIANCES

The electric current in Israel is 220-volt A.C., single phase, 50 cycles which requires special adapter plugs with round prongs. If you intend to take appliances (hair dryer, electric razor, iron) make sure that are suitable for both 110 and 220 volts, make sure to carry a set of adapter plugs. If your appliance is for 110 volts 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!**

HEALTH

You do not need shots or vaccinations to visit Israel. However, should you need any medication, be sure to carry it with you. Also, take some of the following items along for any emergencies: diarrhea medicine (liquid or tablets), sleeping pills (to help overcome jet lag for the first few nights), motion sickness medication (if you are subject to motion sickness), cold or allergy tablets (if you are subject to allergy attacks), and any other personal hygiene products you may require.



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LUGGAGE

International airlines may limit passengers to one large piece of luggage and one carry-on bag (excluding purse or camera bag). Remember you will have to personally carry and lug your own luggage through the airports, past security and through customs. It is highly recommended that you bring only one suitcase and one carry on luggage. In addition to satisfying airline regulations, this limitation also makes it much easier for individuals to keep track of their luggage when it is being loaded and unloaded from the buses and when it is portered at hotels. Be sure your suitcase closes and fastens securely (use extra straps if necessary). Mark your suitcase and carry-on bag clearly so you will be able to distinguish them. Use luggage tags and be sure to attach securely to your suitcases where they can be easily seen by the bell hop. Women should consider using only their initials rather than their first names. It may be wise not to pack cameras, expensive jewelry, or other valuables in your luggage. Keep these with you in your hand luggage.

Be sure to pack anything you will need on the flight in your carry-on bag. Also keep a one-day change of clothes with you in your carry-on luggage – just in case your suitcase should get “delayed in transit.” Don’t over pack. Save some room for items you may purchase and bring back. Remember that on the way over, you will be wearing the same clothes for two days – walking riding, and sleeping in airplanes. Dress for comfort!

MEALS

Hotels serve nutritious breakfasts in Israel, so don’t skip breakfast and dinner will be ample. Dinner will usually be provided back at the hotel while a stop for lunch will be provided along the tour during the day. Some foods will be new to you. Any foods served at our tour chosen spots will usually be safe to eat. Exercise care in eating unpeeled fruit and fresh vegetables purchases in open-air markets unless you peel and/or wash them first. Consider bringing along some snack foods to eat on the bus when you are traveling. Protein bars make an excellent snack item to bring along.

Tap water in Israel is safe and ice cold bottled water will be provided for one dollar on the buses during the tour. Coffee, tea, soft drinks, are also safe to drink. Sometimes the coffee is very strong. Order “filtered coffee” if you want normal coffee. Usually you are required to pay for any extra drinks other than those provided with your meals.

OTHER ITEMS TO PACK

Consider packing a washcloth, wash-n-dries for warm touring days, and your own soap – if it is important to you. Don’t forget your sunglasses, and remember that a hat is an absolute necessity. (One with a broad brim is a wise choice.) Bring your (modest) bathing suit if you want to try your hand at swimming in the Mediterranean Sea, Dead Sea, or Sea of Galilee and for use under Baptism Robes. A dark or neutral color is best under the white robe. You can request a wake-up call form the hotel switchboard, but you may also want to carry a portable alarm clock. Boxed snacks (dried fruit, etc.) can help keep your energy up between meals. Any liquids you take should be in tight (preferably plastic) bottles. Only fill them three-fourths full to allow for expansion. Put each bottle in a small plastic zip-lock bag for further protection.

PASSPORT INFORMATION

Make sure your passport is current. No visas are necessary for people with U.S., Canadian, or British passports. Keep your passport with you at all times. Keep a separate record of your passport number. The easiest way to do this is to make a photocopy of your passport and pack the photocopy in your luggage. Do not pack your passport when traveling! Carry it with you in a safe place at all times.



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If you plan to travel to Moslem countries other than Egypt, Jordan, or Turkey, on arrival in Israel ask the passport control officer not to stamp your passport. (You cannot visit some Moslem countries with an Israeli-stamped passport.) As you hand over your passport, just say, "Please do not stamp my passport." The officer will issue you a separate temporary visa. Keep this with your passport at all times. It will be removed when you leave Israel.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Take a camera and film. (Film can be expensive overseas.) Also, take an extra set of batteries for your camera. You may wish to invest in a lead-lined bag to hold your film to avoid any x-ray damage. (Film can be hand inspected in U.S. airports, but European and Israeli inspectors will run it through their x-ray machines.) You may be required to unload your camera for inspection when boarding planes. Sometimes they will permit you to snap a blank picture instead of removing the roll, but you cannot count on this. The best policy is to make sure you have no film in your camera when you arrive at the airport.

If you have a new, expensive foreign camera, you may wish to register it with U.S. Customs at the airport before leaving the United States. Otherwise, you might be charged duty on it when coming back into the United States. (Your valid sales slip will be proof instead, if you prefer.)

You may want to keep a record of each picture as soon as you take it. Later you will not recognize all you took during the trip. Use discretion in what you photograph – especially military personnel and installations, Moslem women with covered faces, orthodox Jews, etc. When in doubt, ask permission first.

PHYSICAL EXERCISE

Israel is a land of hills and valleys, and you will be walking up and down many of them. It is strongly recommended that you begin walking early to condition yourself. You may want to use the shoes you plan to wear in Israel just so they are "broken in," and you are comfortable walking in them.

SHOPPING

The English language is spoken sufficiently everywhere so that language is never a problem. Shopping is fun in Israel, but be careful with your money. Sometimes street peddlers and shops charge much for things of little worth. Don't feel pressured to buy. Part of the fun in shopping is the Middle Eastern custom of "bargaining" for an item. When bargaining with the peddlers, never accept the first price of an item as the actual price. Usually the item can be purchased for less than half of the "asking price." (Read Proverbs 20:14 before you go shopping!) Keep a record of all your purchases as this will make the filing of your customs report easy. Be careful about exposing much money at any one given time.

TELEPHONE

Calls to the United States can be placed through the switchboard at all hotels. However, most hotels add a service charge for this service. If you have a telephone company credit card, you can make a direct call through the appropriate international operator and avoid the hotel surcharge. The numbers for the three major long-distance carriers are as follows:

AT&T USA Direct	177-100-2727
MCI Call USA	177-150-2727
US SPRINT Sprint Express	177-102-2727



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If you are using a different long-distance company, check with them before you depart to see if they have an international operator number for Israel.

TRAVELING AS PART OF A GROUP

Expect some inconveniences such as schedule changes. Things do not always run as smoothly as they do in the United States.

Be careful about sharing your faith. This is an especially sensitive situation. Let your life and conduct count. Consider the believers there whose situation you might make more difficult by arousing anger or by giving a poor testimony.

Pray for the tour. Live with others as Christians. Plan to cooperate and stay on schedule with the group. The guide and tour host are concerned for the welfare of the entire group, and they count on your cooperation to make it an enjoyable time for all.

WEATHER

November through March is the time Israel will see some rain. While you should have many beautiful days, expect to see rain, especially in the hill country. Rain is considered a great blessing to the nation of Israel. The average temperature can vary greatly depending on where you are in Israel. Expect mild days and cool nights in Jerusalem.

SUMMER (June/July/August/early September)

Temperatures usually in the high 80's (27C), 90's (32C). Tel Aviv, and Tiberias will be hot and humid (like New York or Miami). Jerusalem is dryer and cooler, particularly at night. Masada and Eilat are extremely hot (possibly above 110F (43C)...but dry. There won't be a drop of rain.

AUTUMN (late September/October/November)

Daytime temperatures will be very pleasant: around 60-70F (15-21C) degrees in most of the country (still hot, though, around the Red Sea and Dead Sea). Jerusalem will be in the 40-50F (5-10C) in the evening. There may be some rain - nothing torrential.



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