

## Best of Israel & Jordan

**Country(ies):** Israel & Jordan

**Tour type:** Shoestring

**Transport:** A/C minibus/coach

**Group size:** Min: 2 | Max: 45

**Days:** 11 Days

**Start location:** Tel Aviv, Israel

**End location:** Tel Aviv, Israel

**Departs On:** Sunday

**Meals:** Breakfasts - 10, Lunches - 0, Dinners - 0

**Highlights:**

Tel Aviv, Caesarea, Haifa, Acre, Sea of Galilee, Tiberias, Golan Heights, Nazareth, Qumran, Masada fortress, Megiddo, Bethlehem, Dead Sea, old & new Jerusalem, Jerash Roman ruins, Petra tour, Madaba mosaics, Mount Nebo views

**Places Visited:** Tel Aviv, Caesarea, Haifa, Acre, Tiberias, Nazareth, Megiddo, Beith Shean, Bethlehem & Jerusalem, Jerash, Petra, Madaba, Mount Nebo



# Itinerary

## Day 1: Arrive into Tel Aviv. Transfer to hotel

We arrive in Israel and the Holy Land, where a representative will meet you at the airport to welcome you and transfer you to your hotel in Tel Aviv.

**OVERNIGHT:** Tel Aviv Hotel

**MEALS:** None

**EXTRAS:** Extra day in Tel Aviv - pre-tour || Extra day in Jerusalem - pre-tour || Single room supplement (ISSHIE)

## Day 2: Tel Aviv - Sea of Galilee - Tiberias

The tour officially kicks off today with a visit to the port city of Jaffa, where we'll take a short walking tour in picturesque alleys of the old, fortified town. While we're here, we will pass by the house of Simon the Tanner and marvel at the views from the hilltop. We then drive north along the coastal road - via Maris, to the archaeological ruins of Caesarea, built by Herod the Great in honour of Augustus Caesar. From here, we go on to visit Megiddo, where the book of Revelations mentions a great battle at the place called "Armageddon". After exploring the ancient ruins, we drive toward the Sea of Galilee, stopping at Cana to visit the Wedding Church where Jesus performed his first miracle, turning water into wine.

**OVERNIGHT:** Tiberias Hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:** None

## Day 3: Sea of Galilee

Today we visit the sites on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee, the stage for many of the events in Jesus' life. We also drive along the shore of the sea to Capernaum, known as 'His Town', the centre of Jesus ministry, where he spent much time healing the sick and performing miracles.

Next, we head to Tabgha - the site of Christ's miracle of feeding the 5,000, visiting the Church of Multiplication - where the mosaic floor depicts a basket with loaves and two fishes, and the Church of the Primacy of St Peter, commemorating Jesus' reinstatement of Peter as chief among the Apostles.

We continue on to the Mount of Beatitudes overlooking the sea, where Jesus preached the 'Sermon on the Mount' and it is believed that he picked his 12 apostles here, and later ascended to the Golan Heights to view the panoramic view of the peaks of Mt. Hermon and the rugged Golan plateau.

Today, we also visit Baniyas (Caesarea Philippi), one of the sources of the River Jordan, where Jesus took his disciples, revealing his purpose and His Church before his last trip to Jerusalem and where Simon identified Jesus as the Messiah.

We end the tour today with a drive to the southern part of the Sea of Galilee to visit the Yardenit Baptismal Site, and later return to Tiberias for another night in town.

**OVERNIGHT:** Tiberias Hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:** None

## Day 4: Nazareth - Jordan Valley - Beit Alpha - Jerusalem

The day kicks off with a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee to experience the calmness and scenery that hasn't changed during the past 2000 years.

We also travel through the Galilee to Nazareth, where Jesus spent his childhood, and the Church of Annunciation, built on the site where archaeologists believe the Archangel Gabriel appeared to the Virgin Mary. While here, you will also see Mary's Well and Joseph's Church.

We then visit the ancient synagogue at Beit Alpha, located at the foot of the northern slopes of the Gilboa Mountains, and later, we'll drive through the Jordan Valley, passing by Jericho, before ascending through the Judean Mountains to Jerusalem.

**OVERNIGHT:** Jerusalem Hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:** None

## Day 5: Masada & Dead Sea

Today we'll witness the remarkable scenery of the Dead Sea we travel to Masada, situated on an isolated cliff in the Judean Desert. The site was declared as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2001. We then ascend by cable car to the fortress, which was the last stronghold of the Jewish Zealots in their war against the Romans.

We also visit the excavations, King Herod's Palace, the synagogue, bathhouse and much More, such as enjoying the breath-taking view of the Roman camps and the Dead Sea below.

Later, we visit the site of the Qumran Caves where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered.

Did you know that nearly 1,300 feet below sea level, the Dead Sea is the lowest point on the earth's surface; so bring your swimsuit as if weather permits it's possible to 'float' on the salty, mineral rich, water.

**OVERNIGHT:** Jerusalem hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:** None

## Day 6: Jerusalem

Start the day at the Israel Museum's Shrine of the Book with the famous Dead Sea scrolls, then a visit to the beautifully renovated model of the Herodian city of Jerusalem, dating back to the time of the Second Temple.

We'll also have the opportunity to enjoy Ein Karem; a picturesque village in the south western outskirts of Jerusalem. This small village has great significance in Christian traditions, since this is where according to tradition John the Baptist was born.

We then visit Yad Vashem the official memorial to the Jewish victims of the Holocaust, established in 1953, located at the foot of Mt. Hertzl, and a not forgetting we visit Bethlehem today; the birthplace of Jesus at the Church of the Nativity and Manger Square.

**OVERNIGHT:** Jerusalem Hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:** None

## Day 7: Jerusalem

Did you know that Jerusalem is the holy city for each of the world's three great religions, Christianity, Judaism and

Islam. Today we head to Jerusalem where our tour will begin at Mt. Scopus for a panoramic view of the city.

The next stop will be at the Mount of Olives, the site where Jesus first gave the Lord's Prayer, followed by a visit to the Garden of Gethsemane where Judas betrayed Jesus.

While in the Old City we will stop at the Western Wall, a holy place for Judaism. We will also visit the actual site of the Second Temple, the Temple Mount. We may visit other famous monuments such as Walk the Way of the Cross, the Via Dolorosa to Calvary and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, housing both the traditional site of Crucifixion and the Tomb of the Resurrection.

We then head just outside the Old City to Mount Zion where we'll stop at the traditional tomb of King David and the Room of the Last Supper.

**OVERNIGHT:** Jerusalem Hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:** None

## **Day 8: Cross from Israel to Jordan, tour Jerash**

This morning we head east from Jerusalem to the Sheikh Hussein border crossing where we proceed through the immigration formalities and enter Jordan where we are met by our Jordanian guide and vehicle. We'll continue on to Jerash, a city of the Decapolis situated about 45km north of Amman in the fertile heights of the Gilad. Jerash is one of the best preserved ancient Greco-Roman sites in the whole of the Middle East and our tour will include the colonnaded streets, the 2nd century Hadrian's Arch, the baths, amphitheatre and the columns of the Temple of Artemis. Our day will finish with a panoramic tour of Jordan's capital, Amman.

**OVERNIGHT:** Amman Hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:** None

## **Day 9: Amman – Mount Nebo - Petra**

After breakfast, we drive to Mount Nebo, from where Moses viewed the Promised Land. From here, you will see the Jordan Valley, Jericho and the Dead Sea.

We'll continue south along the Desert Highway to Wadi Musa, the modern village of Petra and enter the site of Petra and walk, or ride on horseback, to the "Siq" (Canyon). Here, we'll walk through the "Siq" to the red rock city, the ancient capital of the Nabateans from 3rd Century BC to 2nd Century AD and visit the most interesting carved monuments such as the Treasury (El Khazneh - a tomb of a Nabatean king) then the field of tombs, obelisks and the altar.

**OVERNIGHT:** Petra Hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:** None

## **Day 10: Wadi Rum Jeep Safari - Madaba - Amman**

After breakfast, we drive south to the towering mountains and rock formations of Wadi Rum, which enthralled Lawrence of Arabia. While in Wadi Rum, we'll drive through the stunning landscapes on a desert jeep safari, visiting the Lawrence Spring and Khazali Canyon.

Later, we head north to Madaba to visit the remains of the Byzantine church with its ancient mosaic floor map - the oldest surviving original cartographic depiction of the mosaic map of the Holy Land and Jerusalem.

**OVERNIGHT:** Amman Hotel

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:** None

## Day 11: Amman - Sheikh Hussein - Jerusalem - Tel Aviv

After breakfast, we had to the border again and to re-enter Israel. We'll cross the Jordan River and drive back to Jerusalem. You can be dropped off in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv or directly at Ben Gurion Airport (you should not plan for flight departures before 7pm at the earliest). Extra nights are available in Jerusalem or Tel Aviv if you would like to extend the tour.

*\*The sequence of the tour, border crossing points used, hotels used and sites visited may be amended due to local circumstances at the time of travel.*

**OVERNIGHT:** N/A

**MEALS:** Breakfast

**EXTRAS:** Extra day in Tel Aviv - post-tour || Extra day in Jerusalem - post-tour

## Included

- All accommodation as stated in the itinerary
- All transport and transfers
- 24-hour airport arrival and departure transfer service
- English speaking guide during touring days
- All site entry fees
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary

## Excluded

- International flights (available on request)
- Visa fees
- Border tax & crossing fees (payable locally at approx. \$107 per person)
- Travel insurance (compulsory)
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Drinks, snacks, tips and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Tips for tour leaders and drivers
- Any other items not mentioned above

# Options

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Our tours are designed to include all that you need to enjoy a really special time in the destination you're visiting.

However, we do also offer some extra options to complement the tour and add some additional sightseeing or activities, or some extra time at either end of the tour.

All accommodation based options (e.g. Single supplements, extra nights, cruise upgrades) should be booked and paid for in advance so that we can make the appropriate arrangements.

Other options may either be booked and paid for in advance or while you are on the tour, though we recommend booking in advance to ensure there are no issues with availability.

Many options are priced the same throughout the year, but some may incur single or high season supplements - full details are given on the tour reservation form or on request.

## Comfort hotel upgrade (ISSGBO)

**Min numbers:** 1

The standard tour price is based on comfortable mid-range hotels at the local 3 and 4 star level (they can be considered 3-star international standard). This option upgrades the accommodation to our most popular 'Comfort' level, featuring better 4-star hotels in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem and the same Kibbutz Hotel in the Galilee. In Jordan this upgrade includes 4-star hotels. The normal hotels used are given below, though these may be exchanged for others on some dates subject to availability at the time of booking. Tel Aviv - Metropolitan or Grand Beach Jerusalem - Grand Court or Leonardo Galilee - same Kibbutz Hotel Amman - Grand Palace Hotel Petra - Nabatean Castle Hotel If you are a solo traveller then you will need to add the single room supplement for the main tour. An additional supplement will also need to be added to cover the extra cost of a single room in the upgraded hotels. Please check the tour reservation form for prices or contact us for more details.

**Price:** \$420

## Superior hotel upgrade (ISSGBO)

**Min numbers:** 1

The standard tour price is based on comfortable mid-range hotels at the local 3 and 4 star level (they can be considered 3-star international standard). This option upgrades the accommodation to a 'Superior' level, featuring 5-star hotels in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem Amman and Petra and a superior room in the Kibbutz Hotel in the Galilee. The normal hotels used are given below, though these may be exchanged for others on some dates subject to availability at the time of booking. Tel Aviv - Crowne Plaza/Dan Panorama Jerusalem - Crowne Plaza Deluxe/Dan Panorama Galilee - Superior room in the Kibbutz Hotel Amman - Regency Palace Hotel Petra - Old Village Resort If you are a solo traveller then you will need to add the single room supplement for the main tour. An additional supplement will also need to be added to cover the extra cost of a single room in the upgraded hotels. Please check the tour reservation form for prices or contact us for more details.

**Price:** \$1150

## Deluxe hotel upgrade (ISSGBO)

**Min numbers:** 1

The standard tour price is based on comfortable mid-range hotels at the local 3 and 4 star level (they can be considered 3-star international standard). This option upgrades the accommodation to a 'Deluxe' level, featuring some of the best 5-star hotels in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Amman, Petra and a superior room in the Kibbutz Hotel in the Galilee. The normal hotels used are given below, though these may be exchanged for others on some dates subject to availability at the time of booking. Tel Aviv - Carlton or Sheraton Jerusalem - David Citadel or Mamilla Galilee - Superior room in the Kibbutz Hotel Amman - Kempinski Hotel Petra - Marriott Hotel If you are a solo traveller then you will need to add the single room supplement for the main tour. An additional supplement will also need to be added to cover the extra cost of a single room in the upgraded hotels. Please check the tour reservation form for

prices or contact us for more details. Note: This hotel level is not available during peak season dates (Passover, after Yom Kippur and over Christmas)

**Price:** \$1890

## **Single room supplement**

**Min numbers:** 1

This group tour is based on twin-share accommodation. If you are a single traveller and would like to guarantee yourself a single room throughout the tour, please add this option onto your booking. If you are happy to share a room, please let us know and we will see if we can pair you up with another single traveller of the same sex. If a room share is not available when you pay your balance, then the single room supplement fee will be payable. If a room share becomes possible after you have paid your balance then your payment towards the supplement will be refunded. Room shares are arranged in order of booking. Note: Single supplement prices may vary seasonally.

**Price:** \$630

# Tour Notes

## 1. Note

We use good quality hotels rated at the Israeli/Jordanian 3-star standard level on this tour, together with a night in a Kibbutz hotel. Options are available to upgrade the accommodation to Comfort, Superior and Deluxe levels. Prices are available on the options tab.

As different hotel levels are available, this does mean that if some people take up the upgrades there will be more than one hotel pick-up and drop-off each day, though we do aim to plan these to minimise any extra travelling time.

Accommodation is based on twin or double en-suite rooms with air conditioning. All couples will be given a private double room.

Please check the Single Room Supplement option for details on room sharing options and charges for solo travellers on this tour.

## 2. Note

This tour includes an arrival airport transfer from Ben Gurion airport in Tel Aviv to your hotel at anytime on Day 1 of the tour, and a transfer back from your hotel to the airport on Day 11. If you would like to add extra time in Israel and arrive before Day 1 of the tour or leave after Day 11, we can provide you with a quotation for your extra nights and airport transfer.

For legal reasons when crossing from Israel into Jordan, it's not possible for us to use the same vehicle so you'll be escorted to the immigration point on the Israel side of the border before taking a shuttle bus to the Jordanian side where our Jordanian team will greet you. Once in Jordan you'll have a Jordanian guide and driver who will continue with you for this part of the tour. You should budget approximately \$107.00 for border fees which are not included in the tour price. These fees will be paid locally, in cash, when crossing the border. We have many passengers each year crossing this border and our local team are very experienced - full assistance will be given at each side.

## 3. Note

This tour includes two crossings of the Israel/Jordan border. We ask for your patience when crossing borders, as this process can sometimes take more than an hour. Please be assured that our local team is working daily with the authorities and is doing whatever they can at all times to expedite this. We also suggest that you try to travel as light as possible, as the Israeli security is tight and it can take a while for them to search through and check large cases.

Crossing at Beit Shean (Sheikh Hussein) from Israel to Jordan.

Our border assistant will explain the procedure to you at the entrance to the terminal. First, you enter the terminal and visit the exit tax kiosk and pay your exit tax (100 ILS plus 5 ILS surcharge in USD, EUR or Israeli Shekels). Take your exit tax to the immigration counter and hand it over with your passport. After processing your passport you walk through the duty free and outside across the road there is a waiting area. Here you can wait till called to board your shuttle bus to the Jordan Terminal. Note: Our staff cannot accompany you during this process, so you should follow the instructions of the assistant and border staff to ensure your crossing is smooth. You pay the shuttle bus fee of JOD 1.6 (approx. \$2.3 US or 10 NIS) on arrival at the Jordan terminal and then head to Jordanian immigration to arrange your Jordan visa and enter the country. Once on the Jordanian guide, your guide/assistant (sometimes the same person), will handle the taxes and if appropriate, visa payments.

Returning to Israel from Jordan.



Our assistant team on both sides can take you right up to the border fence and will explain to you the procedure throughout.

## **4. International Flights**

We want to give you as much flexibility as possible when it comes to booking your holiday with us. So, to take account of people with varying travel plans, we don't include your international flights in the main tour price. We are however very happy to suggest flights to go with the tour. Please contact us with your preferred dates and departure airport and we'll give you a selection of airlines, times and fares to choose from.

Your airport arrival & departure transfers are included on the first and last days of the tour. All our group tours in Israel start and finish at Ben Gurion airport in Tel Aviv (TLV). Private and tailor-made tours may arrive into Tel Aviv or Eilat.

We do also sometimes advertise flight inclusive packages from selected airports. Where these are shown on our website, prices are correct at the time of quoting, but are subject to continued availability of the fare used. Prices will be reconfirmed at the time of booking, and we will also provide the flight times and airline details before tickets are issued.

Flight inclusive prices are based on the cheapest Economy ticket class available which is generally non-refundable and non-changeable unless the flight is cancelled for reasons such as Covid-19, in which case the airlines are more flexible. More flexible ticket options, as well as Premium Economy and Business Class tickets are available on request for an additional supplement. Any changes made to flight inclusive bookings will be subject to the airline rules on your ticket.

## **5. Note**

On average the group departures on this tour tend to have a minimum of around 10 passengers and an average of 14-18, though we only need 2 passengers to book for a departure to be guaranteed. The maximum capacity of this tour is 45 which is why we class it as a Shoestring level tour. To ensure affordability in what is a very expensive country to arrange tours like this, we share this tour with a small number of other operators so you may join with travellers booking with different companies.

At Encounters Travel we aim to only ever use local Israeli and Jordanian guides and reps. We feel this gives you the best experience of the country and the sites you are seeing. A different guide may be used for the Occupied Palestinian Territory sites to the rest of the tour in Israel.

When crossing to Jordan you will be dropped by your guide at the entry to the Israel/Jordan border crossing and met on the Jordanian side by a guide who will accompany you for the Jordanian section of the tour. On your return to Israel you will again pass through the border independently before being met on the Israeli side. Please check the Border Crossings note for information on border crossing fees.

## **6. Tipping**

Tipping is common practice in Israel, as a sign of appreciation for services provided. You may therefore wish to tip your guide and driver at the end of the tour. You should not feel obliged to tip any particular amount, and should consider your personal budget. We are often asked to provide a guide however, and can suggest that approx. GBP 5 / USD 8 per person per day would be appropriate.

## **7. Passports and Visas - Jordan**

Passports should be valid for at least six months after your departure from the country. Please do not bring an

almost full or almost expired passport. Visa arrangements are the responsibility of the traveller, and requirements are subject to change by the local authorities.

To promote tourism to the country, the Jordanian government has designed the **Jordan Pass**. This provides adults of most nationalities with a free single entry Jordan visa (for stays of 3 nights or more), a discounted package of entrance fees, and free digital brochures for the various sites in Jordan. Please check the Jordan Pass tour note for more information.

Double or multi entry visas for Jordan are no longer available and you will need to arrange two visas if you are doing a combination tour (eg. with Egypt and/or Israel) that visits Jordan more than once. Exceptions may occur if you are crossing to and from Israel via the King Hussein Bridge - please contact us for details.

If you wish to arrange your visa separately in advance, or if your stay will be shorter than four days/3 nights, then a visa fee of 40JD (approx. USD 57) will be due.

Families with children under 12 are recommended not to purchase the Jordan Pass as entrance fees are not charged in Jordan for children under 12. Our Jordan Family tour prices include your entrance fees and we will also arrange a free visa for you on your arrival into Amman airport.

Other nationalities may require a visa prior to arrival and to obtain this in advance, please contact your local Jordanian embassy or consulate or a visa agency for details. In addition, if you plan to enter Jordan via the southern Wadi Araba crossing (Eilat-Aqaba) or the Allenby Bridge/King Hussein border with Israel in the north, you will need to obtain your Jordan visa in advance as these are not available on arrival at the border.

## 8. Passports & Visas - Israel & OPT

Passports should be valid for at least six months after your departure from the country. Please do not bring an almost full or almost expired passport. Visa arrangements are the responsibility of the traveller, and requirements are subject to change by the local authorities.

Many nationalities (including UK, European, USA, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, South African) do not need to obtain a visa to enter Israel as a period as long as your stay is for less than 3 months. Other nationalities should check with their local consulate.

Most of our tours visiting Israel also enter the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). No special visas are required but check points and border posts are operated by the Israeli authorities and access is sometimes limited or restricted.

## 9. Money - Israel

The local currency in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories is the Israeli Shekel (ILS). You do not need to arrange to bring any Shekels with you as exchange facilities are available in the international airports and in most hotels, banks and bureau de changes in major towns. You should try to obtain and keep hold of small denomination notes or coins on you during the tour as these are useful for toilets, tips and small purchases. ATMs are readily available in major towns and many local shops will accept VISA/Mastercard or Amex, but may charge fees of up to 10% - check before you pay. Travellers cheques are not recommended as they can not be changed in many places now, and can incur high fees.

While in Israel and the OPT you will need sufficient funds to cover meals not included in the itinerary, drinks, snacks, souvenirs and personal expenses such as laundry. These should generally all be paid for in local currency, though tips for guides and drivers may be paid in hard currency (GBP, USD, EUR).

It is difficult to recommend a level of personal spending money which will suit everyone as this can differ greatly, but

as a guideline, we would suggest allowing USD 25-35 per person per day as a minimum. Allow more if you plan on doing lots of shopping, or buying many alcoholic drinks.

## 10. Money - Jordan

The local currency in Jordan is the Jordanian Dinar (JD). You do not need to arrange to bring any Jordanian Dinar with you to Jordan as exchange facilities are available in the international airports and in most hotels, banks and bureau de changes in major towns. You should try to obtain and keep hold of small denomination notes or coins on you during the tour as these are useful for toilets, tips and small purchases. ATMs are readily available in major towns and many local shops will accept VISA/Mastercard or Amex, but may charge fees of up to 10% - check before you pay. Travellers cheques are not recommended as they can not be changed in many places now, and can incur high fees.

While in Jordan you will need sufficient funds to cover meals not included in the itinerary, drinks, snacks, souvenirs and personal expenses such as laundry. These should generally all be paid for in Jordanian Dinar, though tips for guides and drivers may be paid in hard currency (GBP, USD, EUR).

It is difficult to recommend a level of personal spending money which will suit everyone as this can differ greatly, but as a guideline, we would suggest allowing USD 15-25 per person per day as a minimum. Allow more if you plan on doing lots of shopping, or buying many alcoholic drinks.

## 11. What to take

**Luggage:** Suitcases, rucksacks or fabric holdalls are all fine to bring with you to Israel and Jordan. You should also bring a small daypack/bag to take out during the day. Your main luggage will normally be left in the hotel during your sightseeing trips – you will not need to carry it far, and there are nearly always hotel porters to assist.

**Luggage limits:** There is no luggage limit for this tour. However, most airlines restrict you to between 20kg and 25kg for your hold luggage and between 5kg and 10kg for hand luggage. Please check with your airline before travelling to the airport.

**Clothing:** The climate in Israel and Jordan varies widely from hot days in the summer to cool and sometimes wet days in the winter months. At night, especially in the deserts, the temperatures can drop quite dramatically. So you must pack for cool conditions. Formal dress (eg. suits & ties) is not required. Modesty rates highly in Jordan (and parts of Israel), especially for women, so to respect the local culture & people, please ensure all clothes are loose fitting and not revealing. Shorts (not hot-pants) are OK in tourist sites, as are T-shirts, but these should not show too much bare flesh (we suggest that your shoulders should remain covered). When visiting any mosques, legs and arms should be covered.

**Other items:** At the Bedouin camp bedding is provided but we recommend bringing a light sleeping sheet or sleeping bag liner for comfort all year round (even with the best efforts, sand does find its way pretty much everywhere). In the winter months, or if you think you would like to sleep under the stars instead of in your tent, then we recommend you bring a sleeping bag with you as it can get very cold at night. We also recommend you bring a sun hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, a basic first aid kit, toiletries, money belt, small torch, camera & charger.

## 12. Booking & Payment

If you would like to book a place on this tour, please complete the online reservation form on our website (via the Dates & Prices tab on the tour page). You may make a deposit or full payment online, or just hold a reservation if you prefer (full payments are due 8 weeks before departure). We will then contact you with more details about how to complete your booking. Payments may be made by debit or credit card (subject to a card processing fee), or by

making a bank transfer, or posting us a cheque/bank draft. Full details will be provided in your booking confirmation email. Please [contact us](#) if you would like any more information or have any questions before making a booking.

## 13. Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory on all of our tours and needs to cover personal accident & liability, medical expenses and repatriation, travel delay & abandonment. We also strongly recommend that you take out cover against cancellation and lost/stolen baggage. Personal medical insurance does not normally provide sufficient cover and is generally not suitable for travel on our tours. You will not be able to join your tour if you have not provided us with details of your insurance or if you arrive without cover in place (no refunds will be due in this event). [More information...](#)

You may arrange your own insurance, or you can take advantage of a comprehensive policy that we can arrange for you through Endsleigh Insurance which has been designed to be suitable for our tours. The policy is available to travellers of all nationalities and you do not need to live in the UK to take out the policy. For full details of cover provided, prices and to apply for one of our policies, please complete [travel insurance application form](#).

Note: Any country that borders the Mediterranean is considered as 'Europe' for the purposes of travel insurance (including Turkey, Israel, Egypt and Morocco). If you are doing a tour that visits one country in 'Europe' and one that is 'Worldwide' (for example, an Egypt and Jordan tour), then you need a 'Worldwide' policy. When completing the form you should enter your travel dates including any extra days involved in overnight flights or connecting travel between your home and the tour. Our policies are not able to cover any extra time or activities other than your tour and options booked with us and your travel to & from home.

Note - to comply with insurance sales regulations, our travel insurance policies are only available to customers booking directly with us. If you have booked through a travel agent you will need to arrange your own insurance.

If your tour includes car hire, or if you plan to arrange a hot air balloon flight locally or do some scuba diving during your tour, you should check the small print in your policy to make sure these are covered (these are covered in our policy). Please also check the maximum altitude that you will be reaching and that full cover including emergency evacuation is provided up to this altitude.

If you are taking expensive camera gear or other electronic equipment with you then please check the coverage and the fine print of your policy to ensure that you have sufficient cover.

*IMPORTANT: We must have your travel insurance details (policy number and type of insurance) before you depart or you may not be allowed to join the tour. If you haven't told us already, please let us know the details when you can. You should take a paper copy of your insurance policy with you as you may be asked to show this at the start of the tour.*

### **Covid-19**

**Before purchasing any travel insurance, please check the coverage provided for situations related to Covid-19, and for the rules about government travel advice. Your normal policy may not be suitable. Details about our own policies cover levels are given [on our website](#).**

## 14. Financial Security

We are a UK registered company and are committed to providing our customers with financial protection to provide peace of mind and to allow you to book with confidence.

We have therefore partnered with Trust My Travel Ltd., which provides financial protection services to over 2000 partners around the world. Funds paid to us by our customers are protected via an Insurance policy held by Trust My Travel. Each traveller and the description of services sold is declared against Trust My Travel's insurance policy directly against our financial failure. In the event of our insolvency, you will be refunded for any unfulfilled products and/or repatriation to the UK (where applicable). Please see [our website](#) or [booking conditions](#) for more information.

## 15. Responsible Tourism

It is impossible not to have an impact on the local environment, cultures and eco-systems when you travel. However, it is very possible to try and ensure that these impacts are as limited, or positive as possible. We are committed to ensuring that we try to leave our host countries in a better state than we found them and encourage and assist our travellers to help us with this.

The following are a few simple tips that require very little effort on your part but which will help ensure that any effect you have on the locations you visit is positive rather than negative.

- Don't prejudge: Things in different countries will almost certainly be different. That doesn't make them worse or inferior, just different.
- Communicate: Don't expect locals to speak your language. Take the trouble to learn a few words or phrases of the local language. Don't worry about sounding silly. Most locals are patient and accommodating and appreciate you making the effort to communicate in their language.
- Conserve energy: Be careful not to waste valuable resources. Use local resources sparingly. Switch off lights, air-conditioning and fans when you leave the hotel room and don't waste water. Remove superfluous packaging. Many countries have far less efficient waste disposal systems than ours. Remove packaging from newly acquired items before leaving home.
- Don't litter: No matter how untidy or dirty the country you're travelling in may look to you, avoid littering, as there is no need to add to the environment's stress. Many of the countries we visit have a tough challenge dealing with rubbish and waste. Please consider taking home as much plastic waste as you can (e.g. water bottles).
- Choose environmentally friendly products: By using environmentally friendly (bio degradable) sun creams, shampoos and detergents you can help reduce pollution.
- Respect local customs and traditions: As you are a guest in these countries, you should also comply with the local customs. If you are friendly and well mannered, the locals will reciprocate and it will only enhance your experience. It's important to follow dress and behaviour guidelines especially when visiting religious or sacred sites (your tour leader will advise you how best to do this).
- If a client commits an illegal act the client may be excluded from the tour and Encounters Travel shall cease to have responsibility to/for them. No refund will be given for any unused services.

All porters are employed and equipped following guidelines set by the International Porter Protection Group (IPPG).

## 16. Follow Us Online

You can stay in touch with us online by following us on Facebook and Twitter. We post updates on relevant travel news in our destination countries, special offers and discounts and other interesting travel related news and information.

[www.facebook.com/encounterstravel](http://www.facebook.com/encounterstravel)

[www.twitter.com/encounterstravl](http://www.twitter.com/encounterstravl) (yes, without the 'e')

## 17. Before you travel

It is important when considering and preparing to travel anywhere in the world that you have a good understanding of the country you are visiting, its laws and customs, and the possible risks and situations that may occur. This includes specific risks related to your itinerary (eg. does it involve water & can you swim, are you fit enough for the activities included), as well as more general risks such as terrorism and natural disasters.

General details and links to more information about health risks, visa requirements, money, and travel insurance are given in these tour notes. We recommend that you re-read all these before your departure as well as the small print of your travel insurance policy so you know exactly what is covered and what is not.

You should take copies of your important travel documents with you and ideally also store them online securely as a backup. Make sure that you have given us your emergency contact details and told that person where and when you are travelling. Ensure you take enough money with you and that you have access to emergency funds.

Finally, you should read through and stay updated with the current [official government travel advice](#) for your destination. We are registered partners with the UK Foreign Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign which provides further useful and invaluable information.

## 18. Health and Vaccinations

You should ensure you are fully insured for medical emergencies including emergency evacuation and repatriation.

Recommended vaccinations and other health protection measures vary according to the country you are visiting and where you are travelling from. We recommend you contact your GP/medical practitioner or a travel clinic for current information on vaccinations needed for your destination. You should ensure that you are up to date with vaccines and boosters recommended for your normal life at home, including for example, vaccines required for occupational risk of exposure, lifestyle risks and underlying medical conditions.

In addition, additional courses or boosters normally recommended for the countries in this region are:

Egypt: Tetanus, Typhoid, Hepatitis A

Jordan: Tetanus, Hepatitis A

Israel: Hepatitis A, Poliomyelitis

Lebanon: Diptheria, Hepatitis A

Malaria is not generally present unless it has been contracted abroad; you do not need to take malaria prophylactics.

More information is available here: [Egypt](#), [Jordan](#), [Israel](#), [Lebanon](#)

Note: We are aware of some places in Egypt using 'black henna' instead of pure brown henna. Black henna contains a chemical dye PPD (paraphenylenediamine) which can result in severe allergic reactions and resultant scarring. To be safe we recommend avoiding any henna tattoos while in Egypt unless you are certain they are using pure brown henna.

## 19. Time

The time in Egypt, Jordan, Israel and Lebanon is GMT plus 2 hours and in UAE GMT plus 3 hours. Daylight saving adjustments have historically been applied in some years but not others. At present it appears that there will be no daylight saving changes in Egypt 2016 and beyond, though this may change at short notice (with a resulting impact on flight times and schedules). In Jordan and Israel, daylight saving of one hour is generally applied between the end of March and the end of October, making it GMT plus 3 hours. Exact dates vary from year to year and

sometimes the changes may be scrapped altogether.

## 20. Voltage

Sockets are two round pronged and 220 volts (Type C). Universal adaptors are available in most airport shops if you don't have one already. Standard European adapters will work fine, though sometimes they may feel a little loose in the sockets. All hotel rooms have electrical sockets where you can re-charge cameras, phones etc. Hair dryers are normally available on request from the hotel reception if not in your room already.

If you have US appliances (110 volts) you will need a voltage converter as well as a plug adapter.

## 21. Entrance Fees & Jordan Pass

The tour price does not include entrance fees to the sites visited on the tour.

### **Jordan:**

We strongly recommend that you purchase a **Jordan Pass** prior to your travel to Jordan. This is a special package that has been designed by the Jordanian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities for tourists visiting Jordan. As well as including a discounted package of entrance fees covering all the sites in Jordan that you will visit on this tour (plus many others), the Jordan Pass also provides free downloadable digital brochures on each attraction, plus a free tourist visa for entering the country (40JD if obtained on arrival in Jordan). It also allows us to speed up our entry to each site as if everyone has the Jordan Pass we won't need to queue for tickets.

A handful of sites that we visit on our tours are not covered by the Jordan Pass (eg. Mt. Nebo, St. George's Church at Madaba, and the Shawmuri & Azraq Reserves), so to keep things simple for you while you are in Jordan, where these are visited in our itineraries, the entry fees are included in your tour price. If you visit any other sites not covered by the Jordan Pass during your free time or on additional tours you arrange while in Jordan, you will need to pay the entrance fee at the site.

The cost for the **Jordan Wanderer Pass** which is suitable for all our tours which visit Petra on one day is JD70 (approx. US\$99). You should also check if your tour visits the Baptism Site at Bethany and if it does, add on the supplement for this site (an extra JD8, discounted from the JD12 payable at the site). Passes are available by completing a simple online form before you travel, taking care to make sure your passport details are entered correctly as this doubles as your visa application. Your Jordan Pass will then be emailed to you as a pdf document, which you should print out and bring with you. You will then need to show this print out at the immigration desk on arrival in Jordan to obtain your free entry visa, and also at each attraction where it will be scanned to confirm your entry. [Obtain your Jordan Pass here](#)

If you do not obtain the Jordan Pass before arriving in Jordan, you will need to pay the entry fees when you arrive at each site and also pay JD40 for your Jordan visa when you enter the country (or arrange your visa in advance).

[More information about the Jordan Pass.](#)

### **Egypt:**

In Egypt, the tour price does not include entrance fees to the tourist sites mentioned in the itinerary. Please check the Exclusions section for a guide to the amount you should allow for this tour (a 50% discount for minors or ISIC card holders is often, but not always available and prices are changed from time to time). For your convenience, your guide will be normally collect payment for all the entrance fees in cash at the start of the tour, and pay them for you as you go along.

## 22. Entrance fees & Jordan Pass

The tour price does not include entrance fees to the sites visited on the tour.

We strongly recommend that you purchase a **Jordan Pass** prior to your travel to Jordan. This is a special package that has been designed by the Jordanian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities for tourists visiting Jordan. As well as including a discounted package of entrance fees covering all the sites in Jordan that you will visit on this tour (plus many others), the Jordan Pass also provides free downloadable digital brochures on each attraction, plus a free tourist visa for entering the country (40JD if obtained on arrival in Jordan). It also allows us to speed up our entry to each site as if everyone has the Jordan Pass we won't need to queue for tickets.

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If you do not obtain the Jordan Pass before arriving in Jordan, you will need to pay the entry fees when you arrive at each site and also pay JD40 for your Jordan visa when you enter the country (or arrange your visa in advance).

[More information about the Jordan Pass.](#)

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**Note:** Please [download an up-to-date copy](#) of these tour notes shortly before you travel as itineraries and information does change from time to time.

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