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**Congregation Beth Ahabah**

***Adult Israel Exploration***

**Led by Rabbi Scott Nagel**

*December 20, 2023-January 3, 2024*

*(rev 18 May 23)*

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| **Wednesday, December 20** | ***DeParture*** |

* Departure from Richmond (own flight arrangements)

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| **Thursday, December 21** | ***bruchim haba’aim-welcome to israel*** |

* Arrival in Israel; Individual transfers to your hotel for check-in (Keshet is happy to help you make arrangements for a private driver or you can easily get a taxi from the authorized Taxi Stand outside the arrivals hall)
* Rendezvous at the hotel in the early evening and meet your Keshet educator and youth counselor.
* Say the *Shehechiyanu* blessing and drink a *l'chaim* at an **opening ceremony** overlooking the Tel Aviv coastline
* Welcome dinner at a local restaurant in the Yemenite Quarter (in walking distance)

***Overnight:*** *Dan Panorama, Tel Aviv*

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| **Friday, December 22** | ***The First Hebrew City*** |

* Breakfast at hotel
* Walk along the “Independence Trail” to learn more about the founding of the city of Tel Aviv and the State of Israel.
* Stroll through the weekly arts & crafts fair at Nahalat Binyamin.
* Lunch stop (on own) in the Jaffa Flea Market or Sarona Market
* Time to prepare for shabbat.
* Candle lighting
* Join Beit Tefilah Yisraeli for a lively musical Kabbalat Shabbat service. Beit Tefilah Israeli is a liberal, independent, and egalitarian community in Tel Aviv, which is committed to Jewish spirit, culture, and social action.
* Festive Shabbat dinner at the hotel

***Overnight:*** *Dan Panorama, Tel Aviv*

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| **Shabbat, December 23** | ***tel aviv shabbat*** |

* Breakfast at hotel.
* Day at leisure to enjoy the city’s museums, galleries and café culture or the beach.
* (The Tel Aviv Museum of Art is open 10-4, The Eretz Israel Museum is open 10-2, Bet Bialik is open 10-2, Nahum Gutman Museum of Art is open 10-3, Ilana Goor Museum is open 10-6, Old Jaffa Visitor’s Center is open 9-5).
* Group Havdalah
* Dinner and evening at leisure.

***Overnight:*** *Dan Panorama, Tel Aviv*

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| **Sunday, December 24** | ***to the negev*** |

* Breakfast at hotel.
* Visit the new ANU-Museum of the Jewish People. Explore the story of the Jewish people through the ages in the new core museum as well as the [Hallelujah! Assemble, Pray, Study – Synagogues Past and Present](https://www.bh.org.il/event/assemble-pray-study-synagogues-past-present/) exhibit.
* Visit Machon Ayalon, a secret underground bullet factory from the Mandate Period.
* Continue to the town of Yerucham in the Negev.
* Check-in at the hotel and time to freshen up.
* Enjoy a delicious home hospitality dinner with the Culinary Queens of Yerucham and hear the story of their family’s aliya and their lives here.

***Overnight:*** *Desert Iris, Yerucham*

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| **Monday, December 25** | ***making the desert bloom*** |

* Breakfast at hotel.
* Visit the grave of Israel’s first Prime Minister, David Ben Gurion, to hear his vision about making the desert bloom.
* Learn about Israel’s first astronaut, Ilan Ramon z”l, as well as the geology of the unique wonder of Maktesh Ramon (Crater) at this visitor’s center.
* Lunch break (on own) in Mitzpeh Ramon.
* Exciting jeep ride in the Maktesh.
* Dinner in Mitzpeh Ramon
* Star Gazing in Maktesh Ramon-Take advantage of the low light pollution and see the plethora of stars and planets from Israel’s strongest portable telescopes (dress warmly as the activity is outside)

***Overnight:*** *Desert Iris, Yerucham*

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| **Tuesday, December 25** | ***dead sea region-lowest point on earth*** |

* Early breakfast at hotel.
* Travel to the Dead Sea Region.
* Cable car up to the fortress of Masada where the last Jewish freedom fighters faced the mighty Roman Empire 2,000 years ago. Tour atop the mountain as we address the troubling issues presented by the Masada story.
* Lunch (on own) at the Masada visitor’s center.
* Head to the “lowest place on earth” for a float in the Dead Sea at a private beach.
* Continue to Jerusalem.
* Check-in at hotel.
* Dinner and evening at leisure.

***Overnight:*** Dan Boutique, *Jerusalem*

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| **Wednesday, December 27** | ***this year in jerusalem*** |

* Breakfast at hotel.
* Begin our exploration of Jerusalem with a spectacular outlook over the city from the Haas Promenade.
* Enter the Old City from Jaffa Gate.
* Walking tour to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, traditional site of the crucifixion and burial of Jesus.
* Lunch break (on own) and shopping time in the Cardo.
* Descend to the Kotel plaza for a brief visit.
* Participate hands-on at a unique archaeological project, sifting through excavated remains from ancient Jerusalem.
* Dinner and evening at leisure

***Overnight:*** Dan Boutique, *Jerusalem*

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| **Thursday, December 28** | ***pathways to peace*** |

* Breakfast at hotel
* Visit Yad L’Kashish-Lifeline of the Elderly. Tour the artisan’s workshops and hands-on chessed project. Finish your visit with time in their giftshop where shopping is a true mitzvah.
* Lunch TBA
* Continue to the Etzion Bloc.
* In the Palestinian village of Husan, meet with the Palestinian and Jewish neighbors building bridges of co-existence through a variety of projects.
* Return to Jerusalem
* Dinner and evening at leisure

***Overnight:*** Dan Boutique, *Jerusalem*

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| **Friday, December 29** | ***shoah to tekumah*** |

* Breakfast at hotel.
* We learn and remember at the Yad Vashem Historical Complex, including the historical museum, Sculpture Garden and Children’s Memorial.
* Lunch break and explore the vibrant Machaneh Yehuda market as Jerusalemites prepare for shabbat.
* Prepare for shabbat.
* Candle lighting
* Kabbalat Shabbat at the Masorti egalitarian Kotel followed by visit to the Kotel plaza or with the Reform community of Kehillat Har El.
* Festive shabbat dinner at the hotel or community dinner with Har El.

***Overnight:*** Dan Boutique, *Jerusalem*

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| **Shabbat, May 25** | ***jerusalem shabbat*** |

* Breakfast at hotel.
* Shabbat morning services at local synagogues.
* Day at leisure to explore the city on your own.
* (The Biblical Zoo is open 10-5, The Israel Museum is open 10-5, The Tower of David Museum is open 10-2, The Bible Lands Museum is open 10-3, The Botanical Gardens are open 9-5).
* Group Havdalah
* Evening: Tower of David “Night Spectacular” sound & light show, projected on the walls of the museum. (Dress warmly as we will be sitting outside)
* Dinner on own

***Overnight:*** Dan Boutique, *Jerusalem*

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| **Sunday, December 31** | ***going green!*** |

* Breakfast at hotel, check-out and depart.
* Travel north along the Jordan River Valley to Kibbutz Sde Eliyahu.
* Learn how this religious kibbutz led the “Green Revolution” in organic farming in Israel. “Bio Bee” tour of the fields and their “bug factory”.
* Lunch break (on own) in Bet Sh’ean.
* Visit the Agamon Hahula Nature Reserve. Guided tour to see the birds and other wildlife in the “Hidden Safari” vehicle.
* Check-in at the hotel in the Upper Galilee
* Dinner at the hotel.

***Overnight:*** *Hagosherim Kibbutz Hotel*

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| **Monday, January 1** | ***mystics and mountains*** |

* Breakfast at hotel.
* Drive to Tzfat, the heart of Jewish mysticism, to explore the alleyways and synagogues of the mystics and trace the development of Kabbalah in the 16th century.
* Art & Kabbalah program with local artist in his studio.
* Shopping time in the Jewish Quarter and artist colony.
* Lunch break (on own)
* Tour the award winning Golan Heights winery, followed by wine tasting.
* Meet former IDF tank commander, Maj. (Res.) Yaakov Selavan at Tel Saki on the Syrian border for an update on the current security situation in Syria.
* Return to hotel for dinner and overnight.

***Overnight:*** *Hagosherim Kibbutz Hotel*

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| **Tuesday, January 2** | ***bashanah haba’ah*** |

* Breakfast at hotel
* Travel to Moshav Yogev to plant an “adopted” olive tree on behalf of your community, tour an olive press, and meet a local farmer. (The synagogue will receive bottles of olive oil delivered after the fall harvest.)
* Lunch stop (on own) in Yokneam
* Outlook over the magnificent Baha’i gardens and the port of Haifa
* Visit the Ahmadi Mosque in Haifa and meet with head of the community.
* Summary discussion and farewell dinner
* Transfer to the airport for departing flights

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| **Wednesday, January 3** | ***Arrival in U.S.*** |

* Arrival in the U.S.
* Listed activities and speakers are subject to confirmation.
* Program will be staffed by a Keshet Israel Tour Educator and youth counselor to allow for age-appropriate learning.
* All breakfasts plus underlined meals are included in the package price.
* This itinerary is proprietary to Keshet and is intended for the promotion of and to inform those considering joining this Keshet trip. It is not to be transmitted to any other party without prior authorization from Keshet.



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