

Israel Spiritual Journeys

With Rabbi Reuben Modek

February 9-12, 2012 (Presidents Day Vacation Week)

Touch the vibrating pulse of contemporary Israel. Visit green energy projects in the desert, cultural and spiritual innovation in the heart of Jerusalem, courageous Jewish and Arab peacemakers by the sea of Galilee and much more. You will walk in the footsteps of our ancients while meeting some of the most exciting trailblazers of Israel's present and future.

Itinerary

(The following is a draft itinerary. A detailed itinerary will be provided 45 days before the tour.)

Day 1 - Sunday

Arrive at Ben Gurion Airport and drive south to the Negev.

Desert Experience: our journey begins in open wilderness incorporating learning, hiking and soul immersion.



"Various peoples have lived in the Negev since the dawn of history: nomads, Canaanites, Philistines, Edomites, Byzantines, Nabateans, Ottomans and of course

Israelis. Presenting stunning natural desert beauty, which covers almost half of the total land area of Israel, the Negev has become a center for advanced desert agriculture and ecological projects."

Check into the guesthouse and a refresh before departing for the evening program.

Explore Shivta - the remains of an ancient desert community.

"Shivta began life as a caravan stop in the Negev for the Nabatean masters of the Incense Route, and flourished in the fourth century before being abandoned at the time of the Muslim Conquest. Because of its distance from the population centers in the Negev the city's houses, public buildings and streets have been remarkably well preserved. Dinner will be at the site accompanied by a desert-true drumming circle."

Overnight: Mashabei Sade

Day 2 - Monday

Eco Judaism - explore the relationship between Ecology and Judaism, as applied to desert agriculture and living by visiting Kibbutz Revivim. There we will discover how saltwater agriculture is used with stunning success.



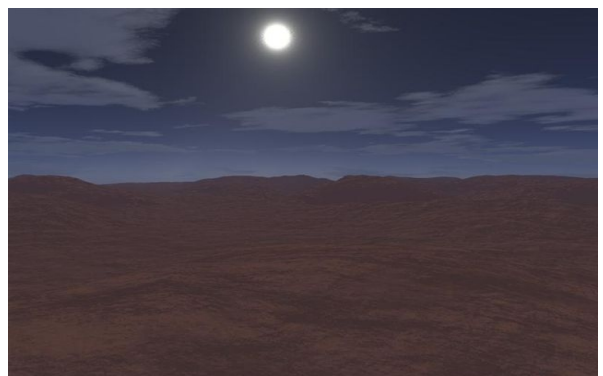
"Kibbutz Revivim cultivates the largest saltwater olive grove in the world and their olive oil is renowned for its excellent quality. A visit to the Mitzpe (observation point) offers an opportunity to relive the early days of the settlement, which was founded in the early 1940's by a small group of pioneers who initially lived in the Byzantine underground water reservoirs and later moved to the traditional stockade."

Hands-on Mitzvah Project - meet and work with special needs youth at the Beit HaShanti Home For Distressed Youth. Most residents are formerly dispossessed and alienated youth from the streets of Tel Aviv. This desert Youth Center, recently opened, uses art and music therapy to reach out to the teenagers.

Neve Midbar, Desert Spring and Spa - relax in the hot water desert springs.

Moonlight tour - take a journey on foot through the Biblical wilderness of Zin, for a glimpse of some of the flourishing night wildlife, guided by a local expert.

Overnight: Mashabei Sade or Nitza



Day 3 - Tuesday

Morning bike ride or jeep tour in the Ramon Crater, the largest one of the three Negev craters.

"The Ramon Crater contains geological formations unparalleled elsewhere in the world. Together with magnificent panorama, it presents a fascinating story of geomorphologic evolution. The Ramon Nature Reserve encompassing the crater and the Negev Mountains surrounding it is the largest nature reserve in Israel."

Drive north

Parents Circle - meet with representatives of this cutting edge organization, a joint forum of Israeli & Palestinian bereaved families working for reconciliation and a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Tour Beth Shearim

"Beth Shearim, home of the Sanhedrin (the ancient Israelite parliament) for a period, became a burial site when burials in Jerusalem were forbidden by the Romans. Today it is a beautifully preserved national park."

Check in.

Tour and experience Hararit, a modern Israeli village in the Galilee, founded by the Transcendental Meditation community.



Outdoor dinner in the Galilean Hills

Overnight: kibbutz guesthouse

Day 4 - Wednesday

Tour the mystical city of Safed.

Sea of Galilee - swimming/hiking in the footsteps of our forbearers.

Participate in a Listening Circle - surrounded by nature, experience an innovative Israeli dialogue technique for introspection and non-judgmental communication led by Jewish and Arab facilitators. The Circle experience will conclude with a dinner at an Arab village.

Overnight: kibbutz guesthouse

Day 5 - Thursday

Drive to Jerusalem -

Head to Gviley Ha'aish, "Scrolls of Fire", a large memorial to the Holocaust nestled in the Martyrs Forest on the outskirts of Jerusalem -On site, take a special musical workshop in preparation for entering Jerusalem. This experience will include the study of "piyutim" (ancient liturgical poetry) and Shehecheyanu, the blessing for a pending first.

Enter Jerusalem via Ein-Kerem - take an introductory Kabbalah lesson or visit an Artist's workshop.

"The village of Ein-Kerem, just outside Jerusalem, has been inhabited since Biblical times and retains its individual character in the old stone houses and tiny streets."



Check in and enjoy a free evening in Jerusalem.

Overnight: Jerusalem

Day 6 - Friday

Tour the Old City of Jerusalem



"Jerusalem was divided in the 16th century by walls into 4 quarters: Jewish, Christian, Muslim and Armenian. Residents from each of the religions meeting and mingling daily have created an interfaith culture that is unique only to this holy city of Jerusalem."

Afternoon free time

Attend Friday night observances with one of the liberal communities of Jerusalem (possibly "Nava Tehila").

"Nava Tehila- "beautiful praise"- is an emerging prayer and study community in Jerusalem, which welcomes people of diverse backgrounds into an ecstatic yet contemporary expression of Jewish spirituality and living."



Overnight: Jerusalem

Day 7 - Shabbat

Early morning: "Around the World in Jerusalem" - a multi-ethnic synagogue tour in the eclectic neighborhood of Nachlaot.

"Built between 100 and 150 years ago, Nahlaot is actually a collection of 32 neighborhoods, each with its distinctive flavor and synagogue."

Optional: Shabbat Shacharit (morning) services with one of the various exciting Jerusalem communities (possibly Shira Hadasha, a cutting-edge Orthodox Egalitarian minyan).

Traditional Shabbat Lunch (including joyous ritual and *Zmirot*, songs)

Afternoon free time

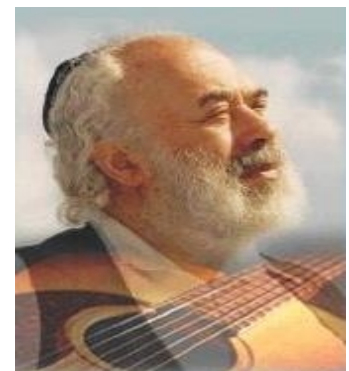
Late evening: movement and wellness workshop followed by Havdala (end-of-Shabbat candle lighting) overlooking the Old City.

Overnight: Jerusalem

Day 8 - Sunday

Depart Jerusalem for Kfar Carlibach (The Carlibach Village) for a Liturgical workshop titled: A Nigun's Journey - from The Ba'al Shem Tov to Reb Shlomo Carlibach.

This interactive session includes singing, storytelling and teachings in the Hasidic tradition of the late Reb Shlomo



Carlibach enhanced by the generous and open-hearted hospitality of the village's colorful residents.

Drive to Tel Aviv

Independence Hall - visit the place where Israel was founded and relive the moment

'Eight hours before the termination of the British Mandate, in what was then Palestine, the members of the People's Council and a host of Zionist dignitaries, listened with emotion as David Ben-Gurion, head of the People's Council, the Zionist Executive and the Jewish Agency, declared the creation of the State of Israel..'



Free time to explore "the Israeli city that never sleeps"

Take a Segway (personal green transportation) tour through the Old Port

Farewell dinner at Bariba, famous for its health conscious Mediterranean cuisine

Return flight to the USA

Israel Tour cost per individual (on a sliding scale per group size)

Group of 6 to 9 - \$2954

Group of 10 to 14 \$2700,

Group of 15 or more \$2515

Reservation deposit: \$300 refundable deposit will reserve your spot on the tour (all costs are subject to change).

Make check payable to Hebrew Learning Circles, Inc. and mail to: P.O. Box 212 Nyack, NY 10960.

Cost Includes:

- 8 days of Government licensed English-speaking tour guide as per itinerary. (Please note that according to Israeli law a tourist bus must be accompanied by a licensed guide.)
- Deluxe air-conditioned motor coach for 8 days & airport transfer upon departure
- 7 nights hotel accommodation at mid-level hotels

- Meals: 7 daily full Israeli breakfast at the hotel, 6 dinners, 1 sit down lunch
- 1 or 2 free passenger sharing a twin room on the groups board
- Entrance fees as per program

Cost Excludes:

- Airfare
- Expenses of a personal nature
- Medical insurance
- Airport taxes, border taxes, visa fees
- Tips to driver, guide, hotel and restaurant staff

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