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***Celebrate 70 Years of Israel's Independence***

**Temple Beth Shalom Family Israel Trip**

**Led by Rabbi Alan Lucas and Sharon Solomon**

**February 13 - 24, 2019**

(Draft: May 4, 2018; Subject to change)

**Wednesday, 13 February – *Depart USA***

**Thursday, 14 February – *Going Up to Jerusalem: An Ancient Jewish Legacy***

* Morning arrival in **Israel** to be met and assisted by your ITC representative *(today’s program depends on arrival time).*
* Travel to Jerusalem through the biblical Ayalon Valley.
* **Shekhiyanu**-Welcome ceremony overlooking the **Old City of Jerusalem**.
* Explore the **City of David** using the Bible and archaeology to make Jerusalem's stones tell the story of the city's ancient past.
* ***OR*:** Discover the archaeological story of the **Western Wall** and episodes of Jewish life 2,000 years ago at **Robinson's Arch** and **the Southern Wall Excavations.**
* Lunch on own
* Check-in to the **Inbal Hotel** in **Jerusalem**.
* Welcome dinner at Medita Restaurant
* Overnight: Inbal Hotel, Jerusalem

**Friday, 15 February – *Digging Up the Past and Preparing for Shabbat***

* Travel to **Beit Guvrin** in the **Judean Lowlands**, crossing enroute the biblical **Elah Valley**, where **David and Goliath** fought.
* Dig up Israel's past by participating in a ***hands on*** archaeological excavation with ***Dig for a Day*** in **Beit Guvrin National Park**.
* Lunch on own
* Explore the raucous **Machane Yehuda Market** and take in a slice of local life as you see Jerusalemites prepare for Shabbat. On the way, see the nearby picturesque **Nachalaot** neighborhoods.
* Free time to relax and prepare for Shabbat.
* **Shabbat** **candle lighting**

**Friday/Shabbat evenings options:**

* Join hundreds of other Jews from around the world to ***Greet the*** ***Sabbath*** at the **Western Wall**. Option to pray together as a congregation at the **"Masorati Kotel**", where men and women can stand together.
* ***OR***: Attend **Friday night services** at a local Jerusalem synagogue.
* **Festive Shabbat Dinner** at hotel
* Overnight: Inbal Hotel, Jerusalem

**Saturday, 16 February – *And on the Seventh Day… in Jerusalem***

* **Shabbat morning services** at a choice of local synagogues (Suggestions and walking directions will be provided).
* **Traditional Shabbat Lunch** at hotel.

**Shabbat afternoon options:**

* **Late afternoon** walking tour to the historic **Montefiore Windmill** to discover the first neighbourhood built outside the walls of the Old City.
* ***AND/OR***: Walking tour to First Temple period burial site at **Ketef Hinnom** – Where archaeologists discovered the oldest biblical text ever found.
* **Havdallah** with Rabbi Lucas.
* Free evening
* Dinner on own
* Overnight: Inbal Hotel, Jerusalem

**Sunday, 17 February – *Masada and the Dead Sea: Freedom Fighters or Fanatics?***

* + Set out early across the **Judean Desert** and ascend **Masada** by cable car to tour the ruins of Herod's palace and the last outpost of Jewish independence. ***Discussion: Which Jewish Legacy – Masada or Yavne?******What decision did our ancesters make?***
* Swim in the **Dead Sea**, the lowest place on earth, at a local resort. The resort also has a fresh water pool and spa facilities. Massage and spa treatments available by prior reservation at own expense.
* Lunch at Dead Sea resort.
* *Time permitting*: Walk in **Ein Gedi Nature Reserve** opportunity to bath in waterfalls and hear how David hid there from King Saul.
* Stop off at **"Abraham's Tent"** for a **Camel ride** and biblical dinner before returning to Jerusalem**.**
* Overnight: Inbal Hotel, Jerusalem

**Monday, 18 February – *Holocaust, Remembrance and Continuity***

* Tour of **Yad Vashem** - Israel's national Holocaust memorial and museum, including the **Historical Museum** and **Children’s Memorial**. (Children under age 10 are not permitted in Yad Vashem's historical museum).
* **Alternate program for younger children**: Visit Jerusalem's **Biblical Zoo**, where you'll see animals which lived in Israel during biblical times. (Children must be accompanied by an adult. Zoo visit not included in the tour price).
* Lunch on own
* Walk through the **Western Wall** **Tunnels** to discover underground Jerusalem.
* Lunch on own in **Jewish Quarter**.
* Guided tour of **Jewish Quarter** including the **Herodian Quarter, Broad Wall, Cardo** and **Rooftop lookout** followed by free time to shop and explore on own.
* Dinner on own in Mamilla Quarter
* Watch the ***Night Spectacular*** *–* **Sound and light show** at the **Tower of David**.
* Overnight: Inbal Hotel, Jerusalem

**Tuesday, 19 February** **– *Jews, Romans and Natural Wonders***

* Travel north through **Jordan Valley**.
* Visit the ancient synaggue of **Beit Alfa** and ponder why its 1,500 year old mosaic floor features a wheel of the zodiac.
* Explore the lavish Roman ruins of **Beit Shean**, once a splendid city of the Decapolis.
* Discover **Ethiopian Jewish culture** at the **Germachin Center** in **Beit Shean**. Hear a personal account of this community's modern day Exodus story and about the challenges facing the Ethiopian Israeli community today.
* **Boat ride** on the **Sea of Galilee** followed by dinner at **Decks** lakeside restautant.
* Check-in to the **Kfar Blum Hotel** on **Kibbutz Kfar Blum** in the **Galilee Panhandle**.
* Overnight: Kfar Blum

**Wednesday, 20 February– *Ancient and Modern Geopolitics and Israel's Finest***

* Walk in the lush **Tel Dan Nature Reserve**, one of the sources of the **Jordan River**, where you'll discover biblical intrigue and one of the oldest arches in the world.
* Lunch on own.
* Look out from the peak of **Mt. Bental** in the strategic Golah Heights for a special perspective on Israel's complex geo-politics.
* ***Please choose one of the following touring and tasting options for the group.*** *(Options adjacent to each other, possibility of the group may be splitting the group).*
* Chocolate making workshop at the **De Karina Chocolate Factory** on nearby **Kibbutz Ein Zivan**.
* ***OR:*** Tour and **wine tasting** at the boutique **Pelter Winery** on **Kibbutz Ein Zivan**.
* **Sunset jeep ride** in the **Golan Heights**.
* **BBQ** dinner with young Israeli soldiers who are giving some of the best years of their lives to the defense of Israel.
* Overnight: Kfar Blum

**Thursday, 21 February – *Cradles of Jewish Civilization in the Galilee***

* Tour the old synagogues and picturesque alleys of **Tzfat,** cradle of ***Kabbalah*** (Jewish mysticism) in the 16th century. Discover the origins of our Friday night service where ***Lecha Dodi***was written.
* Free time to shop and explore on own.
* Lunch on own
* Tour of the **Old City of Acco**: Visit the **Underground Prisoners Museum** in **Acco Prison**, where the British held and even executed Jewish underground fighters.A daring escape from this prison is featured in the film ***Exodus***.Then venture beneath the streets of Old Acco to explore the **Crusader Knights Halls**.
* Travel to **Tel Aviv**
* Check-in to the **David Intercontinental Hotel** in **Jerusalem**.
* Free evening
* Dinner on own
* Overnight: David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

**Friday, 22 February – *The Hebrew City and the Jewish State***

* Travel to **Rehovot** for a guided tour of the **Ayalon Institute** – a clandestine bullet factory used by the Jewish underground before the founding of the State of Israel.
* Mark **Israel's upcoming 71th birthday** at **Independence Hall** by reliving David Ben Gurion's emotional declaration of the new State of Israel.
* Hear about the establishment of **Tel Aviv** at the **Founders' Monument** on**Rothschild Boulevard** and see the **Bauhaus** architecture for which central Tel Aviv was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
* Stroll down **Rothschild Boulevard** to view the **Bauhaus** architecture for which **central Tel Aviv** was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
* Lunch on your own and free time to explore the **Nahalat Binyamin** crafts fair. While there checkout the nearby **Carmel Market** and bohemian **Sheinkin Street**.
* Free time to get ready for Shabbat.
* **Friday/Shabbat evening service options:** To be determined with Rabbi Lucas.
* **Festive Shabbat dinner at hotel**
* Overnight: David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

**Saturday, 23 February**– ***Shabbat in Tel Aviv***

* **Shabbat morning services** - To be determined with Rabbi Lucas.
* Walking tour of "**Little Tel Aviv**" to discover the quaint **Neve Tzeddek** neighborhood that gave birth to the "first Hebrew city in 2,000 years".
* **Traditional Shabbat Lunch** at hotel.
* Visit the **"Aliyah Bet" Memorial** in **London Square** to hear the story of the heroic illegal immigration operations which rescued Jewish refugees before the founding of the State of Israel.
* **Havdallah** with Rabbi Lucas.
* Farewell Dinner at **Goshen Restaurant**.
* Transfer to Ben Gurion Airport – ***See you again soon!***

**Sunday, 24 February *- Arrive in USA***

* Begin planning next **Israel trip** with Rabbi Lucas and ITC Tours!