

Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh
Israel Your Way at the GA Mission to Israel
October 16-25, 2018

Day 1: Tuesday, October 16 – *Depart the USA*

- Welcome to the experience! We're on our way. Today will be spent in the air as we make our way from Pittsburgh to Israel.

Overnight: In Flight

Day 2: Wednesday, October 17 – *Arrival in Israel & Framing the Journey*

- Arrive at 10:15 am (United 84) at Israel's Ben Gurion international airport. Upon completion of airport procedures, we will be met by our tour educator and escorted to our awaiting coach transportation.
- Travel to **Tel Aviv**-Israel's epicenter of innovation, culture and cool!
- Walk along **Rothschild Boulevard**, the epicenter of Tel Aviv's Hitech phenomenon-take part in a unique virtual reality tour which takes us into some of the most exciting start ups
- Grazing lunch on own at the **Sarona Food market**, followed by a session at the **WeWork Campus** with **Dr. Einat Wilf**, a former MK and a leading intellectual and original thinker on matters of foreign policy, economics, education, Israel and the Jewish people (subject to availability). Additionally, we will be joined by some **Talpiot Graduates**. The Talpiot program is an elite IDF training program for recruits who demonstrate outstanding abilities in the sciences and leadership potential. Its graduates have overwhelmingly gone on to become some of the most successful innovators and leaders of the Startup Nation.
- Afterwards, proceed north along Israel's coastal highway to the town of **Zichron Yaakov**, founded by the '*Chalutzim*' (pioneers) of the First Aliya with the generous assistance of the Baron Edmund James de Rothschild in 1882.
- Check-in to our luxury hotel accommodations.
- Enjoy a **welcome dinner** together at **Oratoria**. Located on the hotel premises, Oratoria strives to create a menu of specialties crafted using ingredients sourced from within 30 kilometers from the hotel. Working closely with local farmers to ensure the utmost freshness, the talented kitchen staff prepares everything in-house, from pasta, breads, and cheeses to smoked and cured fish and meats. Additionally, the restaurant features an extensive cellar of fine wines, providing diners with vintages from wineries both local and from around the world.
- Late night tour of the **Yad Ha Nadiv Gardens**

Overnight: Elma Arts Hotel, Zichron Yaakov

Day 3: Thursday, October 18 – *Pittsburgh Karmiel/Misgav: Building a Partnership*

- After breakfast, we depart north towards Pittsburgh's Partnership region, **Karmiel/Misgav**.
- Upon arrival in our region, enjoy an **easy bike ride or walk** led by **Michele Kaplan Green**, director of Nefesh B'Nefesh's '**Go North**' program. Through the generous support of our Federation, Go North is able to fulfill its critical mission of offering employment, networking, social and educational programs for 'Olim' (new immigrants) here in our Partnership region

of Karmiel Misgav and across Israel's north. **Meet with olim** who have benefitted from the initiative.

- Spend the day visiting Federation-supported projects and endeavors and making meaningful personal encounters with community members in our **Partnership region**.
- Return to Zichron Yaakov.
- Upon arrival, enjoy some rest and relaxation at the hotel.
- *Optional:* Guided visit to the **Elstein Gallery** and tour of the impeccably designed grounds of the **Elma Arts Hotel**.
- **Dinner** at leisure in one of the restaurants and cafes along Zichron Yaakov's main street
- The Elma is known for its quality connection to the arts and Israeli culture. More than just a luxury hotel, the complex also features some of the best venues for music performances of all kinds. This evening, we experience some Israeli culture as we take in a **concert** at the **Elma Arts Complex** (details TBA).

Overnight: Elma Arts Hotel, Zichron Yaakov

Day 4: Friday, October 19 – Shared Communities & Erev Shabbat

- After breakfast, we check-out of our hotel accommodations and depart towards the south.
- Travel through the **Wadi Ara** area, populated primarily by Israeli Arabs. Experience up close the nuanced reality of this area's terrain and geography as we experience an overlook over the green line into the **Palestinian Territories** above the divided village of **Barta'a**.
- Civil society program with **JAFI or JDC** (TBA)
- Travel south along Israel's Highway 6. For much of the journey, the road runs adjacent to the Separation Fence and the Palestinian Territories across the Green Line.
- Located in the foothills of the Judean Mountains, we enjoy a thrilling **jeep tour** of this particularly beautiful region along the famed **Burma Road**. Accompanied by renowned Jewish educator **Joe Perlov**, we will focus on some of the more challenging aspects of Israel's complex creation and the effects of the outcome of the 1948 War of Independence on the broader region vis a vis Arab villages which have disappeared. Together, we will discuss the ways in which this complex and nuanced topic resonates on modern Jewish and Israeli identity.
- Lunch at a **local restaurant funded by JAFI** (TBC)
- Ascend to **Jerusalem**. The word "aliyah" which denotes the physical ascent to Jerusalem takes on new meaning as we climb from the Judean lowlands to the city which is the political and spiritual center of the State of Israel. From atop **Mt. Scopus** and within view of the city where King David proclaimed Israel's eternal capital 3,000 years ago, we recite **Shehecheyanu**, the blessing expressing our gratitude upon reaching Jerusalem.
- Proceed to our hotel for check-in and some time to rest, relax and prepare for Shabbat.
- Together as a community, celebrate **Kabbalat Shabbat** overlooking the mesmerizing view of the **Old City of Jerusalem** at night at the **penthouse suite of the Dan Panorama Hotel**. Join **Nava Tehila** for a musical Kabbalat Shabbat journey as they invite us to travel into the landscape of holiness and joy. Through chanting Psalms and Shabbat prayers with original melodies and guided intentions, we will connect to the spirit and allow it to fill our hearts, uplift our souls and welcome the Shabbat.
- Afterwards, we celebrate the occasion with a delicious **Shabbat dinner**, to be joined by local residents with Pittsburgh origins.

Overnight: David Citadel Hotel, Jerusalem

Day 5: Saturday, October 20 – *Shabbat in Jerusalem*

- Enjoy breakfast in the hotel's main dining room.
- Experience the atmosphere of Shabbat in Jerusalem at leisure. For those interested in attending **Shabbat morning services** at nearby area synagogues, a list will be provided.

Special touring options include (choose one):

- Experience the sites of the **Christian Quarter**. Walk through several of the Stations of the Cross along the **Via Dolorosa**, and conclude inside the **Church of the Holy Sepulcher**, held by believers to be the site of Jesus's execution and burial. Receive interesting insights into the status of Israel's multi-ethnic Christian community and the issues of identity it faces as a small minority living in a Jewish state with a sizable Muslim minority.
- **Discovering Hidden Gems of the Old City**. Stroll through the shuks (markets) of the Christian and Muslim Quarters, as well as the covert courtyards and alleyways of the Jewish Quarter. Discover the history, tastes, stories, people and places that make this city unique. Along the way taste the local delicacies – from tahini in the 200-year-old factory through spices, hummus, kebab and Middle Eastern desserts. View the city from special lookout points in all quarters and discover the hidden treasures that the city has to offer.
- Visit the **Israel Museum (on own)**. The Museum houses encyclopedic collections, including works dating from prehistoric times to today. The Jewish Art and Life wings feature the most extensive holdings of biblical and Holy Land archaeology in the world. While here, a visit to the Shrine of the Book, which houses the **Dead Sea Scrolls** (the oldest biblical manuscripts in the world), and the model of Jerusalem in the Second Temple period are a must.
- The **Israel Action Network (IAN)** is a strategic initiative of The Jewish Federations of North America, in partnership with the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, created to counter assaults made on Israel's legitimacy. Israel today faces an intensive and increasingly sophisticated assault on its right to exist as a sovereign democratic Jewish state. The IAN was created to educate, organize and mobilize the organized North American Jewish community to develop strategic approaches to countering these assaults and develop innovative efforts to change the conversation about Israel and achieving peace and security for two states for two peoples. Its work is grounded in building strong relationships with people of faith, human rights advocates, political and civic leaders, and friends and neighbors in local communities. With the help of these allies, the IAN is developing a broader understanding of Israel. Participate in an **IAN advocacy training session**, together with Israeli political operative and former negotiator **Tal Becker** (subject to availability). Mr. Becker will share insight into his important role in the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks throughout the years he was an official member of the Israeli delegation.
- **Text study with Rabbi Dr Danny Schiff**

All together:

- As Shabbat comes to a close, we gather as a community to express thanks for this special time together. A beautiful **Havdalah ceremony** will be held amongst the timeless ruins of the **Tower of David** (subject to availability; or other magical Jerusalem location).
- Dinner on own.
- Feel the presence of millennia of Jewish history and yearning as we have time to reflect at the **Western Wall** at night. Afterwards, explore the famous **Western Wall Tunnels** as they stretch under the homes of the Muslim Quarter and make their way along the entire length of the Temple Mount (subject to availability) **OR** Experience the thrill of history at the brand-new **Sound and Light Show at the City of David**.

Overnight: David Citadel Hotel, Jerusalem

Day 6: Sunday, October 21 – *Special Interest Track Day in Jerusalem*

- After breakfast, we divide into two special interest tracks to experience different sides of the Jerusalem story:

Culinary & Wine Track:

- Visit the goat farm run by **Shai Zeltzer**, who has been producing excellent cheeses from his cave in the Jerusalem Forest for over 30 years
- Proceed to the nearby village of Eshtaol in the 'Kedoshim' forest and visit the renowned **Flam Winery** for a tour and wine tasting. Operating in classic 'European family estate' model, the story of the Flam Winery is a family story. While there, we will meet with members of the family and hear the story of their passion for and inspiration to make fantastic wine in the Jerusalem Hills, and at the same time, serve as emissaries of Israel through their craft around the world.
- Afterwards, travel to the Judean foothill community of Moshav Zakaria for an exclusive encounter with **JAFI's Ethnic Cooks program**. Gather at the home of a local resident and learn how to prepare some of Israel's most delicious dishes-those of the Yemenite, Moroccan and Kurdish Jewish communities! Ethnic Cooks is a social-business training initiative supported by JAFI which aims to enable local women to turn their culinary talents into successful business ventures by providing home hospitality, culinary workshops and catering services to visitors-Israelis and travelers alike. Through the generous support of Federations, JAFI is able to provide the necessary base to create and sustain projects like these which successfully empower women in the community.

Advocacy Track:

- Travel south to Jerusalem to the **Gush Etzion settlement bloc**, the largest concentration of Jewish Settlements in Judea and Samaria (the West Bank).
- In **Efrat**, meet with **Mayor Oded Revivi**. Learn about the guiding rationale and meaning behind the modern settlement movement, as well as discuss the complex and nuanced challenges which it faces. Tour the settlement (subject to availability).
- From **Neve Daniel**, see a comprehensive overlook of Gush Etzion. Known as the southern gateway to Jerusalem, this strategic area comprises the bloc of communities that defended

the southern approach to Jerusalem against the invading armies in the 1948 Israel War of Independence.

- Enjoy **lunch** at the **Gush Etzion Winery**.
- Visit **Rawabi**, the new Palestinian city in construction, and meet with businessman and entrepreneur **Bashar Al-Masri** on site (subject to availability). Afterwards, travel to the Palestinian city of **Bethlehem**. Tour the city and visit its main sights.

All together:

- Return to our hotel to prepare and pack for our journey home.
- Late-check out from our hotel accommodations.
- Gather together one last time for a **group closing conversation** and **farewell dinner** at a leading Jerusalem restaurant TBA.

For those departing tonight:

- Following dinner, a group transfer to Ben Gurion airport will be provided.

For those participating in the GA:

- Following dinner, transfer to Tel Aviv for hotel check-in.

Overnight: David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

Day 7: Monday, October 22

- After breakfast, join **GA programming**.

Overnight: David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

Day 8: Tuesday, October 23

- After breakfast, join **GA programming**.

Overnight: David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

Day 9: Wednesday, October 24

- After breakfast, join **GA programming**.
- Later today, transfer to Ben Gurion airport for your international flight home.

Day 10: Thursday, October 25 – Arrive in Pittsburgh

- After our international flight, we arrive back in Pittsburgh.