

Jewish National Fund
SPIRIT OF ISRAEL TOUR

October 20 - 27, 2016

Leadership

Vivian Grossman, *Tour Chair*

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Professional Staff

Michael Zimmerman, *Director, Central New Jersey*

Tour Guide

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Caesarea

THURSDAY OCTOBER 20 • ARRIVAL / NORTH

Welcome to Israel! There will be two group transfers offered depending on individual arrivals that will proceed north along the scenic coastal route.

For early arrivals, depart with your arranged transfer from Tel Aviv at **9:00am** (location TBD) for **Caesarea**, once the Roman capital of the region. During your tour, see the ancient ruins and excavations of the former Crusader city, the historic aqueduct, and the old amphitheater that has been restored as a concert venue.



Lunch & Wine-tasting

For those landing in Israel this morning, meet your transfer at **11:15am** at Ben-Gurion Airport and depart to Zichron Yaakov, where you will join with the rest of the group.

Enjoy your first meal together with an **opening lunch & wine-tasting** at **Tishbi Winery**, which overlooks the estate's lush vineyards. Dine on local cuisine of fresh vegetables, homemade breads, and fresh cheeses from the nearby Yaakov and Meiri Dairy farms.



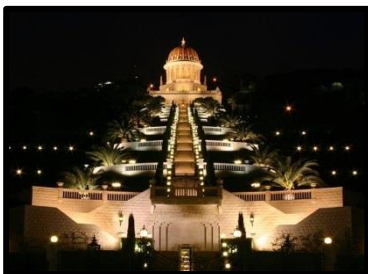
Western Galilee Visitor Center

Proceed to **Akko** and visit the **JNF Western Galilee Visitor Center**, a remarkable multimedia facility that showcases the vast array of activities and attractions in and around the Western Galilee. The center is one of many initiatives that aim to attract and retain 300,000 new residents to the region as part of JNF's *Go North* campaign. Meet **Michal Shiloah, Executive Director of Western Galilee Now (WGN)**, a consortium of artisanal businesses, local entrepreneurs, and tourism operators that works in partnership with JNF to enhance economic, social, and tourism opportunities in the area. Pending confirmation, hear from architect **Ella Lungman**, who will discuss her leading role in developing the architectural design for the Visitor Center.



Haifa

Arrive at the Dan Carmel Hotel by 5:30pm this afternoon with time to check in and freshen up before enjoying **dinner** at a delicious restaurant in the **German Colony**, a lively district in downtown Haifa.



Baha'i Gardens at night

Later this evening, consider an optional visit to the **Baha'i Gardens** for a breathtaking view from the bottom of the beautifully lit complex, which extends all the way up the northern slope of Mount Carmel. Hear a brief overview of this UNESCO World Heritage Site and the history behind the Baha'i faith. Alternatively, consider attending the 32nd annual **Haifa International Film Festival**, which features over 300 award-winning international films that promote themes of pluralism, co-existence, and peace.

Overnight, Dan Carmel Hotel, Haifa

FRIDAY OCTOBER 21 • NORTH / TEL AVIV

Following a delicious Israeli breakfast, checkout and depart the hotel at **8:30am** for **Atlit Illegal Immigration Camp**, a detention camp where thousands of Jewish immigrants were once imprisoned upon their arrival into Israel during the British Mandate. See the restored Galina ship, a replica of a ship that carried 122,000 “illegal” immigrants in defiance of the British blockade to Israel.



Atlit Illegal Immigration Camp

Visit **Ein Hod**, the only artists' village in Israel, and see the diverse artistic media produced by local artists such as paintings, drawings, and sculptures. See the **JNF Memorial**, which serves as a reminder of the destruction wrought by the 2010 forest fires that devastated the Carmel Region as well as a symbol of the area's rebirth.



Ein Hod

Afterward, visit **LOTEM**, a one-of-a-kind organization that enables special needs youth and at-risk women to maximize their enjoyment of nature through outdoor activities, unique educational opportunities, and field trips. See the accessible wine and olives presses and the on-site bakery with **Alisa Bodner, JNF-LOTEM Liaison**, who will discuss JNF's deep-rooted partnership to LOTEM as part of its commitment to ensure that no member of Israeli society is left behind. After a tour, enjoy a boxed **picnic lunch** with the kids.



LOTEM

Proceed to **Tel Aviv**, Israel's cultural center and most cosmopolitan city. Upon arrival, check into the luxurious Carlton Hotel with time to freshen up and prepare for Shabbat.

This evening, enjoy a special **Shabbat dinner** in a private room at the hotel. Pending confirmation, joining us will be **Nefesh B'Nefesh (NBN) lone soldiers**, who will share their personal experiences of leaving their family, friends, and homes in order to serve the State of Israel in the Israel Defense Forces.



Shabbat Shalom!

Overnight, Carlton Hotel, Tel Aviv



Tel Aviv



Masada



Tel Aviv Museum of Art



White City

SATURDAY OCTOBER 22 • TEL AVIV

Today will be at leisure in honor of Shabbat. Optional Shabbat services will be offered at the hotel. Choose to explore Tel Aviv at your own pace, relax at the beach, or participate in one of the following optional activities:

OPTION 1: Spend the day at **Masada** and the **Dead Sea**.* The bus will depart from the hotel in the morning and drive via the Judean Hills along the shores of the Dead Sea, the lowest place on Earth. Continue to Masada, the mountain fortress built by King Herod, where the Zealots made their last stand against the Romans. Learn about the history of the Jewish fighters before taking a cable car ride to the top of the Herodian Palace Complex. Afterward, descend the mountain to the depths of the Dead Sea. Take a swim in the buoyant waters or simply relax at the beach.

(*Additional cost, not included in tour price.)

OPTION 2: Visit the **Tel Aviv Museum of Art**, Israel's leading museum of modern & contemporary art and home to the world's largest Israeli art collection.

OPTION 3: Take a walking tour of **Rothschild Boulevard**, a major commercial center of Tel Aviv. Stroll through the "White City", a UNESCO World Heritage Site, to see the largest group of buildings in the world inspired by the unique Bauhaus style architecture.

The group will rejoin for a beautiful **Havdalah** on the beach, where we will recite blessings and sing prayers to mark the end of Shabbat. Afterward, enjoy dinner on own at one of the many delicious restaurants in the area.

Later this evening, consider joining an optional evening activity at the Israeli Philharmonic, featuring a live performance by world renowned Pianist Yefim Bronfman and the Prague Choir (*pending confirmation*).

Overnight, Carlton Hotel, Tel Aviv



Ayalon Institute

SUNDAY OCTOBER 23 • TEL AVIV / SUKKOT

Following breakfast at the hotel, begin the day at the **Ayalon Institute**, a SPIHS heritage site that was once a clandestine ammunition factory established by the Hagana in 1945. Learn how it operated as the largest bullet factory at the time, producing 2.25 million bullets from 1946 - 1948, completely in secret.

Proceed to the trendy **Sarona** neighborhood, a former German Templar colony that has transformed into a thriving urban complex with new restaurants, beautiful outdoor gardens, and the one-of-a-kind Sarona Market, Israel's largest indoor culinary market that offers every flavor of contemporary cuisine under one roof. Leading our walking tour will be **Noa Gefen**, **Executive Vice-Chairman for the Society for Preservation of Israel Heritage Sites (SPIHS)**. Hear about the work and partnership between JNF and SPIHS that has been preserving and restoring important historical sites throughout Israel. Afterward, take free time to explore and enjoy lunch on own in the area.



Sarona District

Spend the remainder of the afternoon in **Old Jaffa**, an 8,000-year-old port city. During a tour, walk through the winding alleyways, stop at the ancient ruins, and visit the restored artist's quarter.



Old Jaffa

Arrive back at the hotel with time to relax and freshen up before enjoying **dinner** in a private room at the hotel this evening. Joining us will be **Arsen Ostrovsky**, **Executive Director of the Israeli-Jewish Congress**, who will discuss current events related to the Arab-Israeli conflict and international affairs.

Overnight, Carlton Hotel, Tel Aviv



Beit Guvrin Caves

MONDAY OCTOBER 24 • SOUTH / SUKKOT

Following breakfast and checkout, depart south at **9:30am** for Beit Guvrin National Park and explore the wondrous **Beit Guvrin Caves**, recently declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2014. Make your way through this spectacular archaeological phenomenon that bears witness to the region’s tapestry of cultures and evolution from more than 2,000 years ago. Learn about how these approximately 200 multipurpose caves served as cisterns, oil presses, baths, places of religious worship, hideaways and burial areas. Afterward, enjoy a **boxed lunch** at the park.



Be'er Sheva River Park

Proceed to **Be'er Sheva**, the capital of the Negev. Upon arrival, enter the world of Genetics, Nuclear Energy, and Microelectronics with a tour of the **Carasso Science Park**, the largest science park in Israel featuring an interactive museum, a scientific “garden”, and other exciting hands-on activities.

Afterward, continue to the **Be'er Sheva River Park**, the centerpiece of JNF’s efforts to provide a renaissance for the city. Hear updates on how this urban renewal project has become an anchor of tourism and recreation as part of JNF’s *Blueprint Negev* campaign, which aims to attract and retain 500,000 new residents to the region.



Halutza communities

Arrive at the hotel with time to check-in and freshen up before the exciting evening activities to follow.

Following an early 5:30pm **dinner** at the hotel, depart to **Halutza**, where 21st century pioneers are transforming this remote corner of the Negev desert into viable, vibrant communities. Meet with local residents to celebrate the holiday of **Sukkot** and observe **Simchat Torah**, the completion of the annual Torah reading cycle. Enjoy a festive evening filled with dancing, singing and time-honored traditions for an unparalleled authentic experience of this joyous occasion that gives thanks to the fall harvest.



Be'er Sheva Amphitheater

En route back to the hotel, stop by the Be'er Sheva River Park to see the beautiful 12,000 seat amphitheater, the largest in Israel.

Overnight, Leonardo Hotel, Be'er Sheva

TUESDAY OCTOBER 25 • NORTHERN NEGEV



Special in Uniform

Following breakfast and hotel checkout, depart for the **Hatzerim Air Force Base** and see JNF's **Special in Uniform**, a unique initiative that integrates special needs youth into the IDF and assists in preparing them for career placement following army service. Meet with soldiers and hear about how this program instills valuable social, professional, and personal development skills. Pending confirmation, meet with **Lt. Col. (Res.) Tiran Attia, Director of Special in Uniform**.



Aleh Negev village

Proceed to **Aleh Negev**, a one-of-a-kind rehabilitative village that provides high-level medical services and unparalleled care to children with severe cognitive and physical disabilities. See the various therapeutic services and beautifully landscaped grounds that were strategically constructed to positively stimulate the senses by using natural herbs and flower gardens. Meet with **General Doron Almog** and hear his personal story of his late son Eran, who inspired him to become **Chairman of Aleh Negev**.



Home hospitality lunch

Enjoy a delicious **home hospitality lunch** with local Ofakim resident **Osi**. Hear her captivating story of growing up in the area and the challenges of living near the border.

Continue to the **Sderot Indoor Recreation Center**, a JNF signature project that has provided a much-needed sense of normalcy to local residents and children living in the hard-hit town of Sderot, located less than one mile from Gaza. This secure playground was strategically built so that play areas double as bomb shelters, ensuring that all occupants can quickly reach safety in case there is a rocket attack. Meet with local residents and children, who will share their stories of how the center has impacted the community and their lives.



Sderot Playground

Later this afternoon, proceed to **Jerusalem**, the religious and spiritual hub of Israel. Upon arrival, partake in a traditional **Shehecheyanu ceremony** at sunset on **Mt. Scopus**, which provides a spectacular panoramic view of the holy city.



Jerusalem

Check into the Inbal Hotel and freshen up before heading to a private room for **dinner** at **7:30pm** this evening. Hear from special guest speaker and renowned diplomat **Gideon Meir**, a Middle East expert who formerly served as the Israeli Ambassador to Italy. Previously, Gideon also served as Consul and Administration Officer for the Israeli Embassy in Washington, D.C. and was a member of the negotiating team that drafted Israel's peace treaty with Egypt.

Overnight, Inbal Hotel, Jerusalem

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 26 • JERUSALEM

Following breakfast, depart at **8:30am** for the historic **Gush Etzion**, site of one of the deadliest battles during the War of Independence in 1948. Start atop the **Neve Daniel Lookout**, the highest peak in the area, for scenic views of the Judean Hills, Herodian Complex, and Jerusalem.



Gush Etzion Visitor Center

Continue to the **Gush Etzion Visitor Center**, home to a memorial which commemorates the heroic men and women who gave their lives to protect the communities of the Etzion Block, with **Director Shani Abrams-Simkovitz** of the **Gush Etzion Foundation**. See the new **Boys' Promenade**, a JNF project built in memory of Gilad Shaer, Naftali Fraenkel, and Eyal Yifrah- the three teenage boys whom were kidnapped and killed by terrorists in the summer of 2014, sparking Operation Protective Edge.



Pretzel-making Workshop

Proceed to Pat Bamelach, an artisan bread bakery in the heart of Gush Etzion. Engage in a fun, interactive **pretzel-making workshop**, where you will shape, boil, salt, and bake delicious sourdough pretzels with local bakers.



Mahane Yehuda Market

Spend the remainder of the afternoon at the colorful **Mahane Yehuda Market** (commonly referred to as the “Shuk”). During a tour, sample some of the savory spices, taste the fresh produce, and stop at the local butcher stands. Take advantage of the free time by immersing in the bustling energy of this lively open-aired market, and enjoy lunch on own at one of the many local restaurants or cafés.

Afterward, head back to the hotel with time to relax and freshen up before enjoying **dinner** at a local restaurant this evening. Hear from invited guests **Khaled Abu Toameh**, award-winning journalist who specializes in foreign media, and **Nina Rosenwald**, President of the Galestone Institute, an international policy council dedicated to educating the public about the shortfalls of mainstream media.

Later on, consider joining an optional evening adventure to the Shuk to see the new after-hours art gallery called “*When the Shutters Close*”, which portrays modern day heroes, scholars and musicians in a contemporary, graffiti-style art.



Shuk Shutters at night

Overnight, Inbal Hotel, Jerusalem

THURSDAY OCTOBER 27 • OLD CITY / DEPARTURE

Following breakfast and final checkout, depart the hotel for **Ammunition Hill**, site of the famous Six-Day War. Walk through the battlegrounds and bunkers to follow in the footsteps of the soldiers who fought here. See the “Seam-Line” multimedia exhibit about this fierce battle and the reunification of Jerusalem. End at JNF’s **Wall of Honor**, which commemorates Jewish veterans from around the world.



Ammunition Hill

The remainder of the day will be spent in the **Old City of Jerusalem**. After grabbing a quick lunch on own from one of the local food vendors, embark on your comprehensive walking tour. Explore the historic **Jewish & Christian Quarters**; see the original steps that led to the Temple Mount at the **Southern Wall Excavations**; and take time for silent contemplation at the **Kotel**, where Jews from around the world gather and pray. End with an exciting tour through the **Western Wall Tunnels**, an incredible labyrinth of underground arches, tunnels, and passageways. Afterward, enjoy free time to shop for last-minute gifts and souvenirs before departing Jerusalem.



Western Wall Tunnels

Visit the JNF **9/11 Memorial**, built in memory of the victims of the September 11 terrorist attacks. Designed by award winning Israeli artist Eliezer Weisshoff, the memorial depicts the World Trade Center and Pentagon through sculpture and landscape architecture. It is the only place outside of the United States that recognizes the names of the people who were killed on 9/11.

Our journey concludes with a special **farewell dinner** at a local restaurant before transferring to Ben Gurion Airport for return flights to the U.S.A.

Overnight, En Route



Kotel