

Jewish National Fund

# SPIRIT OF ISRAEL MISSION

April 1 – 9, 2014

## Leadership

Larry Cohen, *Mission Chair*

Michael Blank, *Mission Chair*

Todd Patkin, *Mission Chair*

## Professional Staff

Sara Hefez, *Regional Director, New England*

Aaron Parker, *Regional Director, Northern California and Pacific Northwest*

*Itinerary Subject to Change*



David Citadel Hotel

## TUESDAY APRIL 1 • ARRIVAL / JERUSALEM

Welcome to Israel! Upon individual arrivals into Israel, meet your transfer driver and proceed to **Jerusalem**. The mission will officially begin this evening with a **welcome dinner** at a local restaurant. Afterward, there will be an optional walk to the **Western Wall**, the last remaining wall that enclosed the Temple Mount in the Second Temple Period.

Overnight, **David Citadel Hotel, Jerusalem**



Old City of Jerusalem

## WEDNESDAY APRIL 2 • JERUSALEM

Following a delicious Israeli breakfast at the hotel, depart for a walking tour through the **Old City** of Jerusalem. Begin in the Jewish Quarter where echoes of history meet the voices of present day in this living testament to the Jewish presence in Jerusalem. Start at the **Western Wall** and listen to the soft sounds of prayer and contemplation before proceeding to the **Southern Wall Excavations** to see the original steps that lead to the Temple Mount. Take a stroll down the **Cardo**, Jerusalem's main street more than 2,000 years ago. Continue to the **Church of Holy Sepulchre**, believed to be the location of Christ's crucifixion, burial and resurrection.



Western Wall Tunnel

Afterward, take an exciting tour through the **Western Wall Tunnels**, an incredible labyrinth of tunnels, arches and passageways that expose Jerusalem's rich history, archeology and topography. Following **lunch**, enjoy some free time to explore the rest of the Old City's four quarters at leisure.



Ammunition Hill

Later this afternoon, proceed to **Ammunition Hill**, site of the famous battle during the Six-Day War. During a tour, follow the footsteps of the soldiers who fought here and see the new "Seam-Line" multimedia show about the Six-Day War and the reunification of Jerusalem. Afterward, continue to JNF's **Wall of Honor**, which honors Jewish veterans from around the world.



9/11 Living Memorial

Proceed to the **9/11 Living Memorial**, built in memory of the victims of the September 11 terrorist attacks. Designed by award winning Israeli artist Eliezer Weishoff, the memorial depicts the World Trade Center and Pentagon through sculpture and landscape architecture and is the only place outside of New York



Light & Sound Show

that recognizes the names of the people who were killed on 9/11 as well as their countries of origin.

This evening, enjoy **dinner** at a local restaurant. Afterward, head to the **Tower of David** for the **Light and Sound Show**, a cutting edge pyrotechnics show that unfolds with a blaze of images to tell the story of Jerusalem’s rich history.

**Overnight, David Citadel Hotel, Jerusalem**



Medical Center

## THURSDAY APRIL 3 • CENTRAL ARAVA

Following breakfast, depart the hotel and drive south through the Negev to the **Central Arava**. Upon arrival, visit the new **Central Arava Medical Center** in Sapir. In partnership with the Central Arava Regional Council and the Israeli government, JNF has built a world-class medical center to replace the dilapidated clinic and provide quality care to local residents and workers. Pending confirmation, several **local doctors** will explain how the medical center is improving the quality of life and care for those who need it most.



AICAT Students

Next, visit the **Arava International Center for Agricultural Training (AICAT)**, a 10-month agriculture work-study program where students from Asia learn farming practices and agricultural techniques that they can bring back to their home countries. Visit with students and staff and hear about their experiences taking part in this apprenticeship program.



R & D Station

Enjoy **lunch** with **Mayor Eyal Blum** of the Central Arava. He will share his vision for the future of the Arava and also discuss his work with JNF to develop the region, improve the quality of life and attract new residents.

This afternoon, visit a **Research and Development station** to learn how agricultural experts and farmers are working together to find solutions to the challenges of desert agriculture.



Beresheet Hotel

Later this afternoon, continue to Beresheet Hotel in **Mitzpe Ramon**. Situated on the edge of a cliff overlooking the Ramon Crater, the hotel offers breathtaking views of this unique geological phenomenon that can only be found in the Negev. This evening, enjoy **dinner** at the hotel.

**Overnight, Beresheet Hotel, Mitzpe Ramon**

*Itinerary Subject to Change*

## FRIDAY APRIL 4 • NEGEV / TEL AVIV



Inside the Ramon Crater



Be'er Sheva River Park



Pipes Bridge in Be'er Sheva



Tel Aviv

Early this morning, there will be an optional **jeep tour** through the Ramon Crater. Discover the colorful landscapes and hidden treasures that this natural phenomenon has to offer.

Following breakfast and hotel check-out, head to **Be'er Sheva**, the capital of the Negev. Visit the **Be'er Sheva River Park**, the centerpiece of JNF's efforts to provide a renaissance for the city. During a tour, hear an update on the project's amazing progress as well as plans for its continued development. See the **Pipes Bridge**, a pedestrian and cycling bridge linking the Old City of Be'er Sheva to the park.

Continue to the future site for a 23-acre **lake** that will use recycled water to offer boating, bird watching and other activities and also double as a recycled water reservoir for park irrigation. Afterward, see the new 12,000 seat **amphitheater**, which is Israel's largest outdoor performance venue. Visit the new **Abraham's Well Visitor Center**, which showcases the life of the patriarch Abraham.

Following a **falafel lunch**, take a drive through the new community of **Givot Bar**, which developed by JNF in partnership with the OR Movement.

Continue to **Tel Aviv**, Israel's cultural center and most cosmopolitan city. After checking into the hotel, take a stroll through **Nahalat Binyamin**, the famous pedestrian street filled with musicians, handmade jewelry and artifacts.

This evening, enjoy **Shabbat dinner** at the hotel.

**Overnight, Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv**

## SATURDAY APRIL 5 • SHABBAT

Today will be at leisure in honor of **Shabbat**. Optional Shabbat services will be offered at the hotel. Consider these additional options for the day:

OPTION I: Take a stroll along Tel Aviv's **beach**, situated along the sparkling waters of the Mediterranean or relax at the hotel pool. Later this afternoon, sit at an outdoor café on the Tel Aviv Promenade and watch as Israelis and tourists come together for some festive folk dancing.

OPTION II: Participate in an **optional day tour to Masada and the Dead Sea.\*** The tour departs the hotel in the morning and heads south along the shores of the Dead Sea, the lowest place on earth. Continue to Masada for a cable car ride to the top of the Herodian Palace Complex. Visit the ancient fortress where the Zealots made their last stand against the Romans and see the remains of the walls, palaces, synagogues, water cisterns, mosaic floors and roman baths. During the tour, hear the heroic story of the Jewish fighters.

Afterward, descend the mountain to the depths of **Dead Sea** for an opportunity to “float” in the buoyant waters and experience its therapeutic effects. Later this afternoon, return to **Tel Aviv**. (\*Additional cost)

This evening will be at leisure, providing an opportunity to explore Tel Aviv's restaurants and nightlife at your own pace.

**Overnight, Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv**

## SUNDAY APRIL 6 • TEL AVIV

Begin today with a visit to the **Ayalon Institute**, a secret bullet factory established by the Haganah in 1945. As the largest bullet factory during that time, it produced 2.25 million bullets from 1946 - 1948, completely in secret.

Continue to a local **fire station** for a special tour. Ranked among the best firefighting and rescue services in the world, Israeli fire fighters are often the unsung heroes of Israel. Several firefighters will share their personal experiences and then give an exciting demonstration of their unique skills.



Tel Aviv Beach



Masada



Dead Sea



Israeli Fire Fighters



Planting a Tree

Afterward, proceed to **Neot Kedumim**, an eco-tourism site and “living museum” that recreates the physical setting of the Bible in all its depth and detail. Following **lunch**, Head to the **Harvey Hertz - JNF Ceremonial Tree Planting Center**, which serves as JNF’s primary planting center in Israel. Each person will have the opportunity to **plant a tree** and contribute to JNF’s ongoing afforestation efforts in Israel.

This evening, head to **Old Jaffa**, an 8000-year-old port city. Walk through the winding alleyways, stop at the ancient ruins and explore the restored artist’s quarter filled with galleries and boutiques. Afterward, enjoy **dinner** at a local restaurant.



Jaffa

**Overnight, Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv**

## MONDAY APRIL 7 • NORTHERN ISRAEL

Following breakfast and hotel check-out, drive north along Israel’s scenic coastal route. Along the way, stop in **Caesarea**, once the Roman capital of the region. See the excavations of the Crusader’s city, the aqueduct and the amphitheater that has been restored as a concert venue.



Caesarea Port

Enjoy **lunch** in the **Yemen Orde Youth Village** with several students who will share their experiences in this unique program.

Afterward, continue to the **Ein Hod Artist Colony**, a quaint artist’s village filled with galleries, museums and restaurants. Take some time to explore the artist colony and all of the local galleries before stopping at the new **JNF-KKL Park** that was built as part of an effort to restore the region following the devastating Carmel Forest Fires.

Later this afternoon, continue north to the mystical city of **Safed**. Take a stroll through the alleys of this ancient city and learn about the origins of Kabbalah, the Rabbis that lived here and the artist community that remains.



Safed

This evening, enjoy **dinner** at the kibbutz hotel.

**Overnight, Kfar Blum Kibbutz Hotel, Upper Galilee**

## TUESDAY APRIL 8 • NORTHERN ISRAEL



Hula Valley

This morning, visit the magnificent **Hula Valley**, one of the world's preeminent bird sanctuaries. During a tour along the migration route, see some of the millions of birds that stop in the Hula during the seasonal migration between Europe and Africa.



Baniyas Springs

Proceed to Baniyas Park, one of Israel's most breathtaking natural treasures. Walk along the ancient paths to the **Baniyas Springs**, which gush fresh water out of a limestone cave, creating nature pool-like enclaves.

Enjoy lunch at **Dag Al HaDan Restaurant**, set amid the streams of the Dan River.

This afternoon, explore the **Golan Heights**, one of Israel's most beautiful and strategic regions. Follow the footsteps of Israel's soldiers and gain insight into the complexities and importance of the area.



Golan Heights

During a tour, visit **Mitzpe Gadot**, a former Syrian base and site of particularly harsh battles during the 1967 war. Walk through an old army bunker and we will see what life was like for soldiers manning the outpost. Proceed to **Mt. Bental**, one of Israel's most strategic observation points, overlooking Syria. Hear an update on the current political, military and security issues affecting the region.

Continue through the "Valley of Tears" to the **Oz 77 Memorial**, named after 76 soldiers who sacrificed their lives in some of the fiercest battles of the Yom Kippur War.



Cruise on the Kinneret

This evening, enjoy a **dinner cruise** on the **Kinneret**, Israel's main fresh water source. Learn how JNF is utilizing the most up-to-date water conservation and harvesting techniques to help preserve, recycle and develop Israel's water resources for the long term.

**Overnight, Kfar Blum Kibbutz Hotel, Upper Galilee**

## WEDNESDAY APRIL 9 • JERUSALEM / EN ROUTE



Israel Museum

Following breakfast and hotel check-out drive through the Jordan Valley to **Jerusalem**. Upon arrival, visit the newly renovated **Israel Museum**, one of the leading art and archeology museums in the world. During a tour, stop at the Shrine of the Book to see the Dead Sea Scrolls, the oldest biblical manuscripts in the world. Don't forget to see the new Holy Land Model, a miniature replica of Jerusalem as it was during the Second Temple Period.



Wine tasting and lunch

Enjoy **lunch** at a nearby **winery**. Following a tour, taste some of the spectacular wines produced here.

Afterward, visit **Mt. Herzl** to see the gravesites of Theodore Herzl, Golda Meir, Yitzhak Rabin and other Israeli dignitaries.

Later this afternoon, make a solemn visit to **Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum & Memorial**. A sprawling complex of tree-studded walkways leading to museums, exhibits, archives, monuments, and memorials, Yad Vashem tells the story of the Holocaust from a uniquely Jewish perspective, emphasizing the experiences of victims through original artifacts, survivor testimonies & personal possessions.



Yad Vashem

After this emotional tour, enjoy a special **closing dinner** at a local restaurant before transferring to the airport for return flights to the USA.

**Overnight, En Route**