



Haifa & the North Coast

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Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Port Inn (p158)
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- ➔ Akkotel (p179)

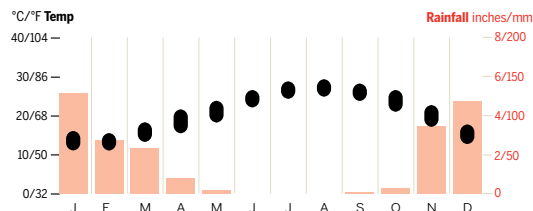
Why Go?

Israel's north coast is a tranquil stretch of the Mediterranean punctuated with old farms, quaint seaside towns and historic sites. The principal settlement is Haifa, a mixed Jewish-Arab city that often surprises visitors with its openness and tolerance. Sprawling across Mt Carmel, Haifa has stunning views, a wealth of museums and the magnificent Baha'i Gardens. Redevelopment has created a thriving nightlife and arts scene.

Haifa is the starting point for a journey north to the historic port of Akko (Acre) and the luminous sea grottoes of Rosh HaNikra. In the other direction, Herod's port at Caesarea and the ancient civilisations of Megiddo should be on the radar of any history buff. Ein Hod and Zichron Ya'acov – home to Israel's oldest winery – are both fine destinations for anyone with a taste for art, wine and homemade beer. After your travels, take some time to chill out on the beaches around Nahariya and Akhziv.

When to Go

Haifa



Apr & May

Temperatures are pleasant and the Baha'i Gardens are in full bloom.

Jul & Aug

Take refuge from the summer heat in the parks and cafes of Haifa's Carmel Centre.

Dec

Every weekend, a Wadi Nisnas carnival celebrates the season's Jewish, Christian and Muslim holidays.

Haifa

חיפה חֵיפָה

04 / POP 272,000

Haifa is one of the Middle East's most picturesque cities. The views from the top of majestic Mt Carmel (546m) are breathtaking, especially from the Baha'i Gardens, but almost everywhere you look in the city

there are interesting, if not always beautiful, urban landscapes, many from the late Ottoman and Mandate (Bauhaus) periods.

Haifa was intended by British planners to serve as the Levant's main port and transport hub, linked – thanks to rail lines and an oil pipeline – to a hinterland that encompassed Transjordan and Iraq. That vision



HAIFA & THE NORTH COAST HAIFA

Haifa & the North Coast Highlights

- ① Admiring the sea views, fountains and flower beds of the sublime **Baha'i Gardens** (p150).
- ② Exploring the vaulted halls and hidden tunnels left by the Crusaders in the walled seaside city of **Akko** (p175).
- ③ Strolling from the Crusader ramparts to the

- Roman amphitheatre at **Caesarea** (p171), Herod's grandiose port city.
- ④ Feeling the immense power of the sea in the shimmering turquoise grottoes of **Rosh HaNikra** (p182).
 - ⑤ Sampling wine and dining well in **Zichron Ya'acov** (p169), a 19th-

- century village on the flanks of Mt Carmel.
- ⑥ Preparing for Armageddon at **Megiddo** (p174), a biblical site where some believe the end of the world will begin.
 - ⑦ Stretching your legs on the hike to **Montfort** (p181), a Crusader castle accessible only on foot.