



# Israel & the Palestinian Territories

## Includes ➔

Jerusalem .....	212
Mediterranean Coast.....	231
Tel Aviv-Jaffa (Yafa).....	231
Haifa .....	241
Akko (Acre) .....	246
Lower Galilee & Sea of Galilee .....	248
Dead Sea .....	258
Eilat .....	261
West Bank .....	264
Ramallah & Al-Bireh ..	264
Understand Israel & the Palestinian Territories ..	273
Survival Guide.....	282

## Best for Nature

- ➔ Ein Gedi Nature Reserve (p258)
- ➔ Makhtesh Ramon (p260)
- ➔ Hula Nature Reserve (p254)
- ➔ Red Sea Snorkelling (p261)

## Best for Culture

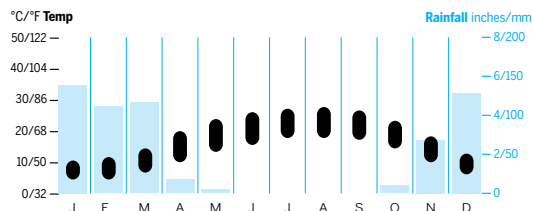
- ➔ Israel Museum (p226)
- ➔ Tel Aviv's theatres and live music venues (p239)
- ➔ Tsfat's art galleries (p255)
- ➔ Ramallah (p264)

## Why Go?

At the intersection of Asia, Europe and Africa, Israel and the Palestinian Territories have been a meeting place of cultures, empires and religions since the dawn of history. Cradle of Judaism and Christianity, and sacred to Muslims and Baha'is, the Holy Land offers visitors the opportunity both to immerse themselves in the richness and variety of their own religious traditions and to discover the beliefs, rituals and architecture of other faiths. Distances are short, so you can relax on a Mediterranean beach one day, spend the next rafting down the Jordan River or floating in the mineral-rich waters of the Dead Sea, and the day after that scuba diving in the Red Sea. Hikers can follow spring-fed tributaries of the Jordan, discover verdant oases tucked away in the arid bluffs above the Dead Sea, and explore the multicoloured sandstone formations of Makhtesh Ramon.

## When to Go

### Jerusalem



**Feb–Apr** Hillside and valleys are carpeted with wildflowers; the ideal season for hiking.

**Jul–Aug** Warm and dry in Jerusalem, humid in Tel Aviv, infernal at the Dead Sea and Eilat.

**Sep–Oct** Jewish holidays generate a spike in domestic tourism – and room prices.



## Israel & the Palestinian Territories Highlights

- 1 Admire the magnificence of Jerusalem's **Dome of the Rock** (p218), place a note between the ancient stones of the **Western Wall** (p219), and visit the **Church of the Holy Sepulchre** (p214), believed to be the site of Jesus's crucifixion.
- 2 Ascend the Snake Path before dawn and watch the sun rise from atop **Masada** (p259).
- 3 Take a dip in the warm Mediterranean and watch the birds at the beaches of **Tel Aviv-Jaffa** (Yafo; p231).
- 4 Explore the nooks and crannies of the **Church of the Nativity** (p268) in Bethlehem.
- 5 Wander the narrow alleyways of **Tsfat** (Safed; p255), a centre of Kabbalah (Jewish mysticism) since the 16th century.
- 6 Admire the breathtaking sea views from Haifa's spectacular **Baha'i Gardens** (p241).
- 7 Float in the briny, soothing waters of the **Dead Sea** (p258).
- 8 Hike amid the sheer cliffs and coloured sands of **Makhtesh Ramon** (p260).