Israel & the Palestinian Territories

Daniel Robinson, Orlando Crowcroft, Anita Isalska, Dan Savery Raz, Jenny Walker
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A whirlwind introduction to Israel's most important historical, religious and natural sights.

Spend your first four days in and around Jerusalem, including a couple of days wandering the alleys of the Old City, exploring the Western Wall and the adjacent Temple Mount/Al Haram Ash Sharif, and following the Via Dolorosa to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Break out your swimsuit and hiking shoes for a full-day excursion down to the Dead Sea and up the storied stronghold of Masada. Next, head to the Mediterranean coast for three days around Tel Aviv, dividing your time between strolling, cycling, lounging on the beach, fine dining and watching the world go by. Next, head up the coast for a peek at Roman-era Caesarea before pushing on to Haifa. Check out the views from atop Mt Carmel and the Baha’i Gardens before a day trip to the walled city of Akko and the grottoes of Rosh HaNikra. After a day in Nazareth, concluded with a tongue-tingling ‘fusion’ dinner, head to Tiberias for a day exploring the storied shores of the Sea of Galilee. On the drive back to Jerusalem, stop at the Roman ruins in Beit She’an.
Explore the best Israel has to offer from the Lebanese border to the Red Sea.

After four or five days in and around Jerusalem, including a couple of days exploring the Old City and a half-day visit to the Israel Museum, take a trip down to the wondrous caves at Beit Guvrin–Maresha National Park, stopping at a winery on the way. Next, stir it up in Tel Aviv for a few days, strolling along the beachfront promenade to historic Jaffa, biking along the Yarkon River and working on your Mediterranean tan.

On your way north to Haifa, stop at the Roman ruins of Caesarea and the quaint old town of Zichron Ya’akov, famed for its vintage winery. After touring Haifa’s sublime Baha’i Gardens, visit Mt Carmel and the Druze village of Daliyat Al Karmel. The next day, continue north to Akko, with its enchanting mixture of Crusader ruins and Ottoman relics. Next, go as far north as politics permit, to the subterranean grottoes of Rosh HaNikra, before heading inland for a couple of days in Nazareth, exploring Christian sites and dining on traditional Arab delicacies and East-West fusion dishes.

Based in Tiberias for a couple of days, relax around the Sea of Galilee, combining ancient synagogues and Christian sites with quiet beaches and, perhaps, white-water rafting on the Jordan River. Loop east to the Golan Heights, visiting the hilltop ruins of Gamla, the Golan Archaeological Museum in Katzrin and towering Nimrod Fortress. Circle west via the lush vegetation of Banias Nature Reserve to the wetlands of the Hula Valley, beloved by migrating birds; the quaint, cobbled streets of Rosh Pina; and Tsfat, suffused with the spirituality of the Kabbalah (Jewish mysticism). Finally, head south through the Jordan Valley, strolling the colonnaded Roman thoroughfares of Beit She’an. After a starlit night on the shores of the Dead Sea, rise early to catch the sunrise from high atop Masada. Continue south into the Negev Desert for a day or two around Mitzpe Ramon, including a hike into Makhtesh Ramon. The last stop, for a spot of sea, sun and snorkelling, is Eilat.
Above: Spices, Mahane Yehuda Market (p81), Jerusalem
Left: Tomb of Yasser Arafat (p275), Ramallah
From simple hummus to Arab- and French-inspired gourmet meals, this tour of gastronomic hot spots takes in the Holy Land’s most delicious dishes.

Start in Jerusalem, where contenders for the ‘best hummus’ title can be found in the Old City, and the foodie scene around the Mahane Yehuda produce market is worth exploring. For the country’s best gooey-hot, cheesy-sweet kunafeh pastry, head north to the West Bank city of Nablus and then sample extra-virgin olive oil in Jenin. Make a beeline for Nazareth, where the buzzword is fusion. Continue your culinary pilgrimage on the shores of the Sea of Galilee with a lunch of St Peter’s fish and then head to the Golan Heights for perfectly aged steak – paired, of course, with Golan-grown red wines. Looping west, stop in Jish for Galilee-style Arab cuisine or drop by the all-vegetarian settlement of Amirim for meat-free treats. Finally, head to the Mediterranean coast, sampling seafood and hummus in Akko, creative Arab cuisine in Haifa, and modern Israeli cuisine in Tel Aviv, where glamorous restaurants run by celebrity chefs vie for attention with traditional eateries serving hummus, falafel and the local fast-food favourite, sabich.

This route takes you to the major Palestinian cities and sights.

Start off at the Yasser Arafat Museum in Ramallah before jumping on a sherut up to Taybeh to check out the West Bank’s oldest brewery for an hour or two. Spend your first evening either bar-hopping in Ramallah or hanging out with the locals in the cafes close to Manara Sq. The next day jump on a bus to Nablus for a day of shopping in its enchanting market, scrubbing up at an ancient hammam and visiting the Samaritans atop Mt Gerizim. Up early the next day, grab a service to Jenin and check out the Freedom Theatre and then either head back to Ramallah or spend a day staying with farmers near the northern village of Burqi’in. Take a service to Jericho for a full day of sightseeing (perhaps two, if you want to see everything). End your trip with a couple of nights Bethlehem, with its winding lanes and ancient churches, and a day trip to the troubled city of Hebron, profoundly sacred to both Jews and Muslims.
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Dan Savery Raz

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THIS BOOK

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**Sights**
- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

**Activities, Courses & Tours**
- Bodysurfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

**Sleeping**
- Sleeping
- Camping
- Hut/Shelter

**Eating**
- Eating

**Drinking & Nightlife**
- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

**Entertainment**
- Entertainment

**Shopping**
- Shopping

**Information**
- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

**Geographic**
- Beach
- Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

**Population**
- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

**Transport**
- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- Cable car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro station
- Monorail
- Parking
- Petrol station
- Subway station
- Taxi
- Train station/Railway
- Tram
- Underground station
- Other Transport

**Routes**
- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed road
- Road under construction
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour detour
- Path/Walking Trail

**Boundaries**
- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

**Hydrography**
- River, Creek
- Intermittent River
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Reef

**Areas**
- Airport/Runway
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Glacier
- Mudflat
- Park/Forest
- Sight (Building)
- Sportsground
- Swamp/Mangrove

*Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book*
Jenny Walker

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OUR STORY
A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that’s all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, Across Asia on the Cheap. Within a week they’d sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London, Melbourne, Dublin, Oakland, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony’s belief that ‘a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse’.

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