

St. Mark's Church & Temple Sinai

Tour of Israel & Extension to Jordan

Israel: October 30 - November 13, 2022

Jordan: November 12 - November 16, 2022

TRAVELER VERSION



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ISRAEL

A journey to Israel & the Middle East is a spiritual journey through ancient history, religious customs and modern practice. On this tour, we will worship and sing in churches and synagogues and interact with Israelis of many faiths and interests. We will tour, experience and exchange with organizations bridging gaps between people and promoting peace in the region and in the greater world. Our journey will expose us to sources of profound human devotion, magnificent achievement, breathtaking natural beauty and music in many forms. Please join us for this very special tour of Israel and Holy Lands.

JORDAN

From Israel, we invite you to journey with us to Jordan. Experience Jordanian hospitality, incredible landscapes, fascinating tradition, and the wonder of Petra, one of the most stunning archaeological sites in the world. Bring friends and family - this is the trip of a lifetime!

TOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 | Sunday, October 30

FLY to ISRAEL

St. Mark's Episcopal Church and Temple Sinai's tourof Israel starts with a non-stop overnight flight from **San Francisco, California USA** to **Tel Aviv, Israel**:

8:00 p.m. depart **San Francisco (SFO)** on **United Airlines #954** bound for **Tel Aviv**.

Refer to your **MCI tour handbook** for tips on making the journey smooth and comfortable.



DAY 2 | Monday, October 31

WELCOME TO ISRAEL!

6:50 p.m. arrive in **Tel Aviv-Yafo (TLV) Airport**.

Your **Music Contact International tour manager** will be waiting to greet you. Together, board a private motor coach and transfer to a well equipped **Tel Aviv** hotel. Check in and refresh from the journey.

A **welcome dinner** celebrates **St. Mark's Church & Temple Sinai's** arrival in **Israel** - We are delighted you have joined this tour of a lifetime!



DAY 3 | Tuesday, November 1

SIGHTSEEING IN TEL AVIV

Each day of your tour begins with **breakfast** in the hotel dining room.

Then, start exploring **Tel Aviv** on a **guided tour**. Modern, vibrant and cosmopolitan, **Tel Aviv** is known for exceptional beaches, Bauhaus-style buildings, a buzzing cultural scene, and its historic **Jaffa** port district with

fascinating Arab heritage.

See highlights including **Independence Hall** where Jewish independence was declared in 1948, and **Rabin Square**, Israel's most famous plaza. Visit the **Rabin Center** to learn about the development of Israel as a nation. Admire the well preserved **Bahaus** architecture and new modern structures with trendy apartments, offices and museums. In **Jaffa**, walk up **Peak Park** for views of the beautiful city and seascape below. On **Wishing Bridge**, grasp your zodiac sign and make a wish legend has will come true!

Then, purchase lunch around the **Carmel Market**, the largest market or "shuk" in **Tel Aviv**, where traders sell everything from clothing to spices, fruit to electronics. Also, spend time in **Nachalat Binyamin**, the largest arts and crafts market in Israel.

Continue discovering enticing neighborhoods of the city - **Neve Tzedek**, **Sarona**, and **Florentin** - each with a distinct flavor and culture. Your guide will make suggestions for where to eat this evening.



DAY 4 | Wednesday, November 2

AYALON INSTITUTE & FREE TIME IN TEL AVIV | SING AT THE BULLET FACTORY

Drive just south of **Tel Aviv** to the **Ayalon Institute** "bullet factory". In the 1940's the site was a secret ammunition factory disguised as part of a kibbutz to fool the British. At its peak, the factory produced about 40,000 bullets a day. Once the bullets were produced, they were smuggled out of the factory to places all over the country. The

factory stopped operating in 1948, and in 1987, it was restored and turned into a museum. **Your choir is invited to sing a song at the Institute to commemorate the sacrifice and courage of those who worked there.**

Return to **Tel Aviv** and enjoy the remainder of the day at leisure - eat, spend time at the beach, stroll the boardwalk, or return to a neighborhood that peaked your interest.



DAY 5 | Thursday, November 3

TEL AVIV TO JERUSALEM | SING OVERLOOKING THE HOLY CITY

This morning, move from **Tel Aviv** to **Jerusalem**. En route, stop at **Haas Plaza** for a panoramic view and to sing *Jerusalem of Gold* overlooking the holy city.

With your guide, begin exploring **Jerusalem** at the **Western Wall** or "Wailing Wall", the most religious site in the world for the Jewish people. King Herod built the wall in 20 BC during an expansion of the Second Temple. When the Romans destroyed the temple, the wall survived. Today, hundreds of people pray each day at **The Wall** offering spoken and written prayers penned on bits of paper placed in cracks on the ancient structure. Admire the relics underneath the walls on a walk through the **Kotel tunnels** featuring exquisite stone arches, aqueducts and pools.

Break for **lunch** at lively **Machaneh Yehudah** marketplace. Then, visit **Mount Zion**, ancient Jerusalem's western hill and highest point. View the **Tomb of King David** set among walls from a synagogue-church used by 1st-century Judeo-Christians. See the room where the **Last Supper** of Jesus and his disciples took place, and the **Church of St.**

Peterin Gallicantu where Peter experienced a tumultuous relationship with Jesus.

At the end of this fascinating day, settle into the **hotel in Jerusalem** before gathering for a **group dinner**.



DAY 6 | Friday, November 4

JERUSALEM & BETHLEHEM | SHABBAT BEGINS | SING AND WORSHIP

Enjoy another day of guided sightseeing! Take in incredible views over the **Shrines at Mount Olive**, a Jewish cemetery and place for religious ceremonies from biblical times. Walk the **Palm Sunday Trail**, the path Jesus took to the **Garden of Gethsemane** and experience the sanctuary where Jesus prayed and was arrested the night before his crucifixion.

Journey to **Bethlehem**, a Palestinian town south of **Jerusalem** in the **West Bank**. As the biblical birthplace of Jesus, Bethlehem is a major Christian pilgrimage destination. **Nativity Square** also known as **Manger Square** marks the center of **Bethlehem** where the **Church of Nativity** sits on a spot believed to be where Jesus was born. The birth site is marked by an inlaid silver star in a grotto under the 6th-century church, the oldest complete church in the Christian world!

An opportunity for the St. Mark's Church & Temple Sinai choir to sing at the Church of Nativity* is being explored.

Return to **Jerusalem** to prepare for **Shabbat**.

This evening, **The St. Mark's Church & Temple Sinai group is invited to worship and sing for Shabbat services at Kehilat Kol Haneshama***, a vibrant community of progressive Judaism. After services, share **Shabbat dinner** in a wonderful gesture of friendship with the local congregation.



DAY 7 | Saturday, November 5

SHABBAT IN JERUSALEM | SING IN THE CHURCH OF ST. ANNE

This morning, you have the option to attend **Shabbat services** with your tour leaders.

Around services, you may want to take a walk on the **Old City ramparts** offering elevated views of historic **Jerusalem** and life below. Later, stroll with your guide to biblical sites including the **Stations of the Cross** where Jesus carried his cross on his way to crucifixion, the **Pool of Bethesda** where Jesus miraculously healed a paralyzed man, **Pilates Judgement Hall** where Jesus was tried and condemned to death, and the **Church of the Holy Sepulcher** where Jesus was believed to be crucified, buried, and resurrected. Admire the **Church of St. Mary Magdalene** with its onion domes and the **Garden Tomb** where some Christians say Jesus was buried.

Enter **The Church of St. Anne**, marking the birthplace of Mary. **The St. Mark's Church & Temple Sinai choir is invited to embrace the beautiful acoustics in St. Anne's and sing a song in the fabulous setting.**



DAY 8 | Sunday, November 6

CHURCH IN JERUSALEM & YAD VESHEM | SING AND WORSHIP

Start the day at church where your choirs are invited to worship and sing for the Sunday service at St. George's Cathedral, home parish of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. Following services, enjoy fellowship

time with the friendly congregation.

Later, pay a solemn visit to **Yad Veshem, The World Holocaust Remembrance Center**, Israel's largest Holocaust memorial with a chilling collection of photographs, films, letters, works of art, and personal items obtained from the camps and ghettos. **Your choirs will be asked to offer a song of remembrance in the Memorial Room of Yad Veshem*.**

Dinner for the group will be arranged this evening in **Jerusalem**.



DAY 9 | Monday, November 7

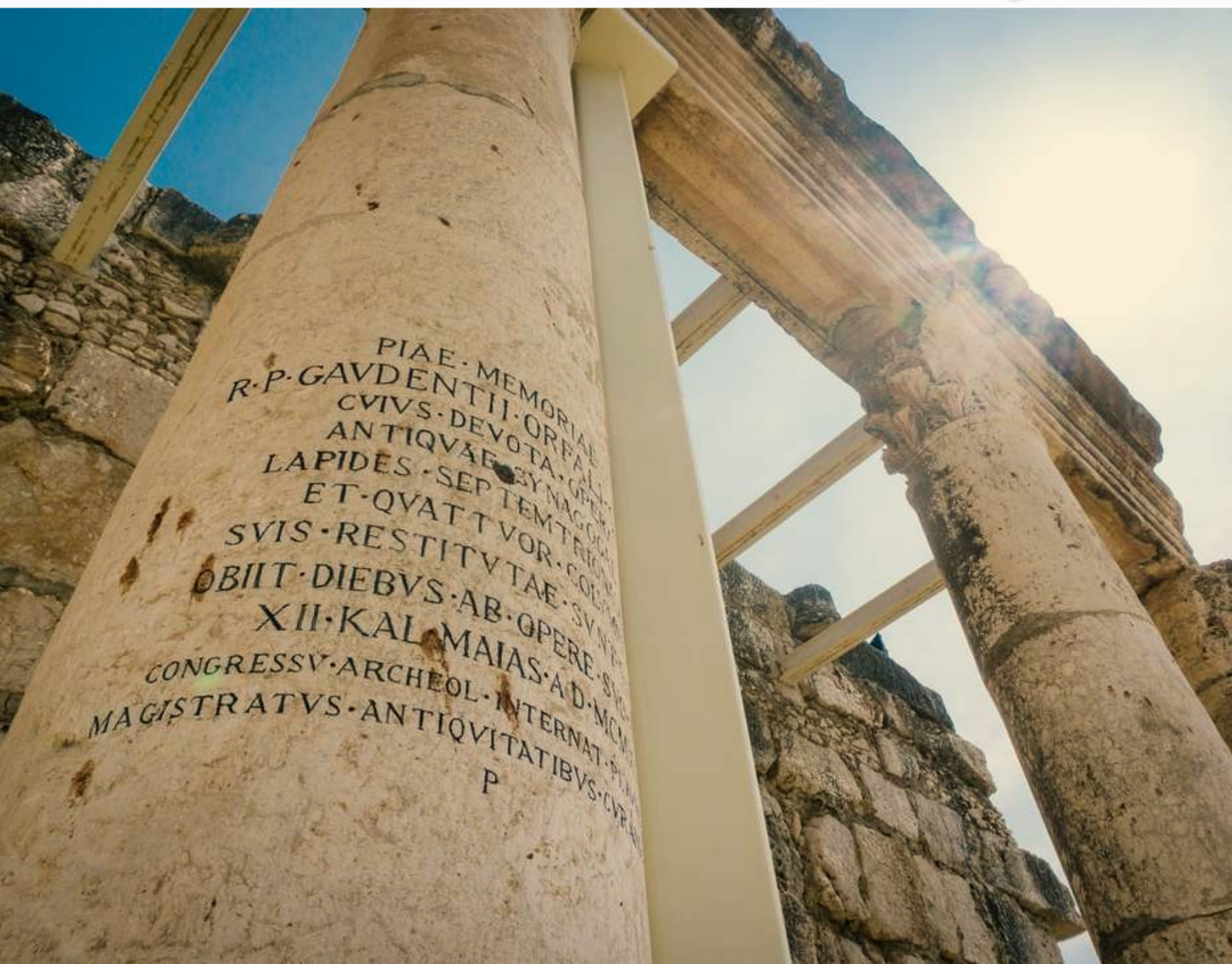
MASADA, THE DEAD SEA & JERICHO

Start out early for **Masada**. The foundations of this historic complex and palace tower over the desert affording astonishing views. Ride up to the fortress by cable car or make the challenging walk up the hillside. Either way, you'll be rewarded with a grand look at history through well-preserved ruins of the **Ancient Kingdom of Israel** and its people in the face of the Roman siege.

After touring **Masada**, head to a resort at the **Dead Sea** to swim and float in the salty waters, cool off, and refresh. There will be time for lunch and to purchase locally produced bath salts, mud masks and cosmetics the area is known for.

On the way back to **Jerusalem**, pass by the **Qumran Caves** where the **Dead Sea Scrolls** were found by a Bedouin shepherd in 1948. If possible, make a stop in **Jericho**, the oldest city in the western world!

Return to the hotel for **dinner** before going out for the **Tower of David Night Light Show**, a multimedia extravaganza that brings ancient **Jerusalem** to life through sound, light and color!



DAY 10 | Tuesday, November 8

CAESAREA, NAZARETH & THE SEA OF GALILEE | MUSICAL EXCHANGE

Check out of the hotel in **Jerusalem** and move north. Make a stop in the historic port town of **Caesarea** before turning inland to **Nazareth**.

Nazareth, known as the "City of Churches" is said to be where the Archangel Gabriel announced the birth of Jesus to the Virgin Mary and where Jesus spent his childhood. It is the largest Arab city in Israel and beloved destination of pilgrims who flock to its **Church of Annunciation**.

In **Nazareth**, enjoy a special visit to the **Polyphony Foundation** which strives to improve Arab and Jewish relations through music. The organization supports cooperation, cultural exchange, and dialogue as a healthy way to bridge Arab and Jewish communities. **A presentation and musical experience for the St. Mark's Church and Temple Sinai group is being arranged with the foundation***.

Following the exchange, continue on to the **Sea of Galilee**, where Jesus is said to have walked on water. **The Sea of Galilee** is the lowest freshwater lake on Earth and second-lowest lake in the world! Enjoy a **scenic boat cruise** around this natural wonder!

At the end of this exciting day, settle into your **Kibbutz style hotel**. **A group dinner will be served in the dining room. Later, it may be possible to get together for a song session with local residents.**



DAY 11 | Wednesday, November 9

THE GALILEE & HAVAYAH CENTER | SINGING & SPIRITUALITY

This morning discover wonders of **The Galilee** with guided sightseeing. View the recently discovered 1st-century synagogue and **Magdala Stone**, a discovery many call the most significant archaeological find in the past 50 years. Then, onto the 2,000-year-old remains of the **Capernaum synagogues** where Jesus taught. Also see **St. Peter's House** and the **Mount of Beatitudes**, where Jesus preached his "Sermon on the Mount".

Spend a musically rich and spiritual afternoon at **Rabbi Or Zohar's Havayah Center** – sing, explore, meditate, do yoga, have a healthy meal and refresh mind, body and soul! **The Havayah Center of Being** in **Hararit, Israel** is in the heart of the **Galilee**, surrounded by nature, hiking trails, and vistas. It is a great treat to be spending time at the center and collaborating with **Rabbi Zohar** on this special encounter for **St. Mark's Church and Temple Sinai** guests.

Tonight, **dinner** will be prepared for the group at your hotel.



DAY 12 | Thursday, November 10

TZFAT & THE GOLAN HEIGHTS

Visit the mystical city of **Tzfatz**, a traditional setting of gorgeous synagogues, Kabbalah and artists. People from

around the world study Kabbalah teachings and spirituality in **Tzfat** and the city is infused by their creative energy. See the synagogues and other highlights with your guide followed by time for independent discovery and perusing the artisan shops and galleries in the charming town center.

Later, ascend the **Golan Heights** with a stop at **KatzrinPark**, a open-air museum on the site of a 3rd-century Jewish village from the time of the Talmud. Reenactments and story telling are common here.

Return to your hotel in the **Galilee** for **dinner**.



DAY 13 | Friday, November 11

RETURN TO TEL AVIV FOR SHABBAT | WORSHIP & SING

Bid farewell to **The Galilee** and return to **Tel Aviv**. Upon arrival, there will be opportunity to visit **The Museum of the Jewish People at Tel Aviv University**.

Check into a hotel for a final night's stay. The afternoon in **Tel Aviv** is open to spend as you wish.

This evening the St. Mark's Church and Temple Sinai group will worship and participate in Shabbat services at Beit Daniel*a reform, diverse synagogue.

A Shabbat Farewell dinner is being arranged!



DAY 14 | Saturday, November 12

FULL DAY IN TEL AVIV BEFORE DEPARTING ISRAEL

Check out of the **Tel Aviv** hotel this morning.

Those going to Jordan will depart very early around 6 a.m. (see Jordan plan below)

Those returning to California have the whole day in Tel Aviv before transferring to the airport tonight. The flight to San Francisco departs just after midnight.

DAY 15 | Sunday, November 13

ARRIVE HOME

12:55 a.m. depart **Tel Aviv** on **United Airlines #955** bound for **San Francisco**

6:00 a.m. arrive in **San Francisco, California**.



JORDAN EXTENSION (OPTIONAL)

Plans for the Jordan extension are underway and we will provide a detailed itinerary as soon as possible. We envision routing like this:

DAY 14 | Saturday, November 12

TEL AVIV TO JORDAN

Depart **Tel Aviv** early this morning for **Jordan**. Whether we travel to **Jordan** over land or by air will be confirmed shortly. The current plan is to travel to **Wadi Rum** or other **Bedouin communities** to experience Bedouin culture and hospitality. We will spend tonight in a hotel in this area.

DAY 15 | Sunday, November 13

TO PETRA

We will spend the morning enjoying activities in the desert before driving north to **Petra**. We would like to start visiting **Petra** this afternoon and plan to spend the next two nights in a hotel near the site.

DAY 16 | Monday, November 14

FABULOUS DAY IN PETRA!

Guided visit of ancient **Petra**, a world wonder!

DAY 17 | Tuesday, November 15

PETRA TO AMMAN / FLY HOME

Drive north in **Jordan** from **Petra** to **Amman** sightseeing along the way. Fly home from **Amman**. The flight departs just after midnight and arrives in **San Francisco** the morning of **November 16**.



Israel *awaits...*

Rick Steves visits Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Madasa and more! | © 2014 Rick Steves' Europe



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Your Tour INCLUDES:

FLIGHTS - *professionally managed with group airfare*

- Non-stop roundtrip flights for your group between San Francisco and Tel Aviv
- One checked suitcase per person roundtrip is also included!*

Our flight team handles custom flight requests and upgrades.

**Please note airline baggage inclusions are subject to change until flights are ticketed.*

ACCOMMODATIONS - *thoughtfully selected to match group needs*

12 nights in 4-star hotels as follows:

- 3 nights in Tel Aviv at the beginning of the tour
- 5 nights in Jerusalem
- 3 nights in a Kibbutz style hotel in the Galilee
- 1 nights in Tel Aviv at the end of the tour

MEALS - *varied, flavorful, and highlighting local cuisine*

- Breakfast daily at your hotel

9 Group dinners served as follows:

- Welcome Dinner at the hotel in Tel Aviv
- Dinner at the hotel on arrival night in Jerusalem
- Shabbat dinner with Kehilat Kol Haneshama community
- Group dinner in Jerusalem at a local restaurant
- Dinner at the hotel on last night in Jerusalem
- 3 Dinners at the Kibbutz style hotel in the Galilee
- Shabbat Farewell Dinner in Tel Aviv

SINGING OPPORTUNITIES & MUSICAL EXCHANGES *that are customized, unique, and inspiring*

Music is the heart of this tour and the suggestions made here reflect the type of performances, venues, musical exchanges, and experiences we will arrange for your ensemble. Impromptu singing on tour is encouraged!

- Choral tribute at the Ayalon Institute
- Sing *Jerusalem of Gold* overlooking the city from Haas Plaza
- Possible opportunity to sing at The Church of Nativity in Bethlehem
- Worship & Sing for Shabbat services at Kehilat Kol Haneshama
- Sing at the Church of St. Anne in Jerusalem renowned for acoustics
- Participate in the liturgy and perform at St. George's Cathedral in Jerusalem
- Choral offering at Yad Veshem Holocaust Museum

- Musical exchange in Nazareth through the Polyphony Foundation
- Possible song session with local residents in Galilee hotel
- Singing and spirituality in the Galilee and at the Havayah Center with Rabbi Or Zohar
- Worship and participate in Shabbat Services at Beit Daniel reform synagogue

ACTIVITIES + TOURS + ENTRANCES - *handpicked for your travelers*

Experience fabulous guided sightseeing :

- Tour Tel Aviv & Jaffa
- Guided discovery of Tel Aviv neighborhoods: Neve Tzedek, Sarona, Florentin, and more
- Rabin Center Museum
- Carmel Market & Nachalat Ben Yamin Art Fair Tel Aviv
- Ayalon Institute "bullet factory"
- Guided Touring in Jerusalem
- Kotel Tunnels tour
- Mount Zion, King David's Tomb, Western Wall
- Stations of the Cross, Pool of Bethesda, Pilate's Judgement Hall, Church of Holy Sepulcher, Mary Magdalena, Shrines at Mount of Olives, Palm Sunday Trail, Gethsemane and the Garden Tomb, Room of the Last Supper, St. Peters in Gallicantu
- Machaneh Yehuda market Jerusalem
- Yad Veshem Holocaust Museum
- Tower Of David Light Show (if available, schedule pending)
- Excursion to Bethlehem and the Church of Nativity
- Masada Fortress by cable car
- Swim in the Dead Sea
- Qumran Caves & Dead Sea Scrolls
- Visit ancient Jericho
- Guided exploration of Tiberias/Galilee region
- Magdala, Capernaum synagogues, St. Peter's House, Mt. Beatitudes
- Havayah Center musical and spiritual experience with Rabbi Or Zohar
- Tzfat synagogues, Kabbala and artisan shops
- Cruise on the Sea of Galilee
- Arab city of Nazareth
- Ceasarea on the Mediterranean Sea
- Museum of the Jewish People at Tel Aviv University

TOUR MANAGER *to handle on-the-road logistics*

A full-time tour manager to accompany your group every step of the way from arrival through departure. Our beloved tour managers assist with:

- Greeting and gathering the group upon arrival
- Expediting hotel check-ins and check-outs
- Liaising with reception desks, coach drivers, and guides
- Facilitating concerts and rehearsals
- Directing on-site entrances and activities, handling tickets and vouchers
- Keeping each day well-paced
- Sharing cultural content and interpreting local customs
- Sending everyone home with fond memories & hopes to travel together again soon!

TRANSPORTATION *in a private, modern, climate-controlled motor coach with a professional driver for all services specified in your itinerary.*

INSURANCE *that covers our commitment to you*

Music Contact International, Inc. holds \$5,000,000.00 of Travel Agent and Tour Operator Professional Liability Insurance.

COVID-19 INSURANCE *from Israel*

The Israel Incoming Tour Operators Association provides Covid coverage serviced by Madanes Co. The policy will pay various applicable benefits up to a maximum of USD 30,000 per person for this trip should you be diagnosed with COVID-19 within 28 days of your arrival in Israel.

TOUR ENHANCEMENT MATERIALS *to help prepare for your tour*

- A custom Traveler's Resource Site (TRS): We build this site specifically for your tour as a resource to engage in from the start: View the itinerary and watch it develop. There are maps, pictures, packing lists, recommendations for destination-based books and movies, collections of FAQs, and helpful travel links.
- A customized Tour Handbook with hourly itinerary, packing tips and lists, practical "Things to Know", destination background, and other fun content. This printed booklet is provided for each traveler about a month before departure.
- A luggage tag, passport/document holder, and outlet adapter is also included.

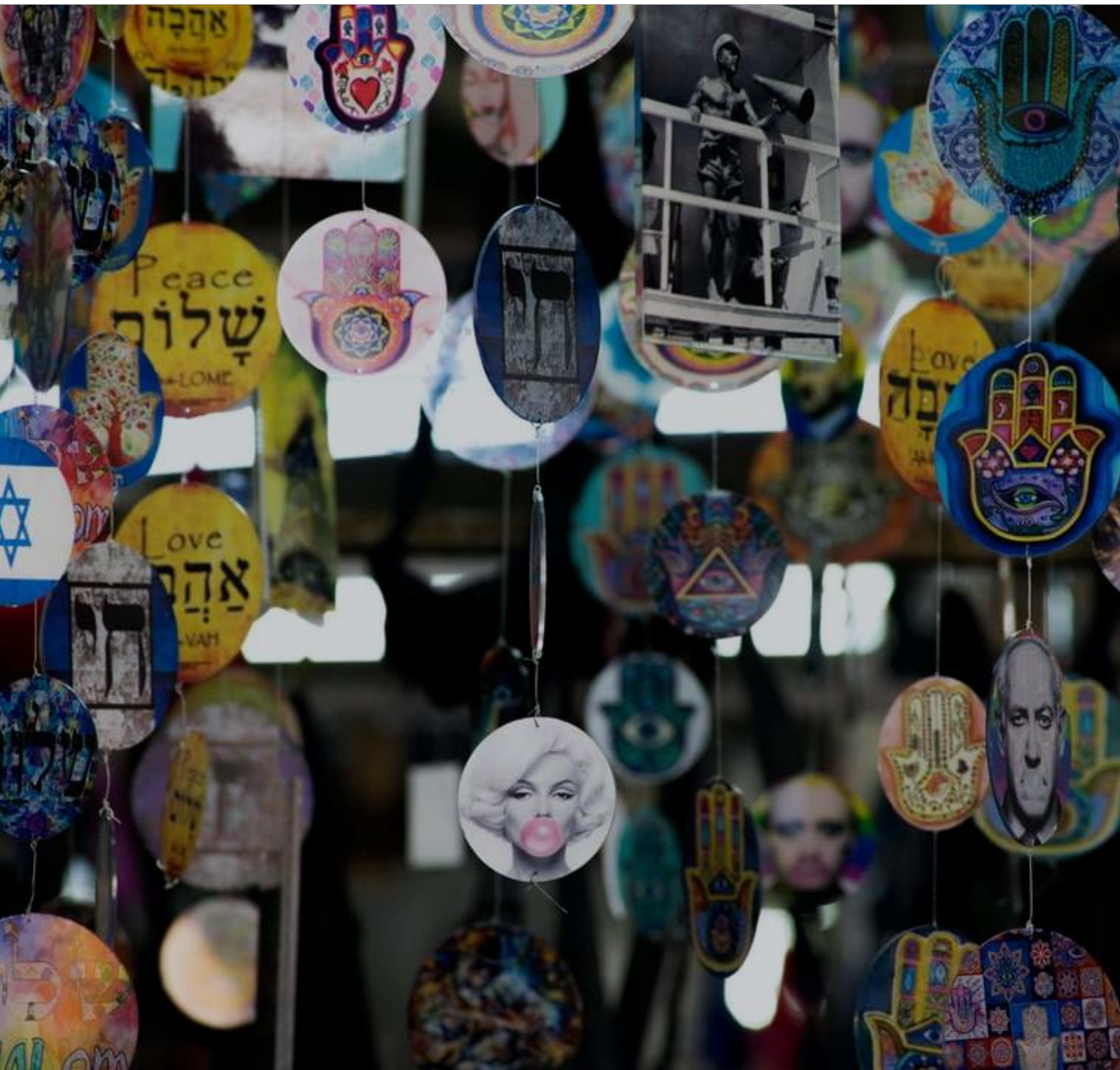
MUSIC CONTACT INTERNATIONAL SERVICES *go beyond logistics*

- A unique opportunity to make lifelong friends through music and pilgrimage! When we bring groups together, friendships develop that frequently extend to years of heartfelt reunions on tours we plan around the world.
- You are in good hands! We've got 30+ years' experience arranging custom cultural and special interest tours, performance tours and festivals for choirs, bands, and orchestras.
- Our MCI team is the best in the business! We are musicians, teachers, event planners, parents, performers, volunteers, travelers, linguists, athletes, and more, from many countries, sharing our expertise at producing great tour experiences.
- We are right there with you! Often, a person who works on your tour, escorts it. This means your tour manager's expectations for a great program and activities are as high as yours!

- Details are our specialty! Group leaders appreciate our well-organized, user-friendly systems and tools for handling group logistics, payments, and diverse traveler needs.
- You'll love our flexibility! Do some of your travelers need individual flights? Adjoining rooms? Gluten-free meals? We are always glad to help.

CONVENIENT ONLINE PAYMENT SYSTEM -*tour accounting has never been easier!*

MCI has a secure, password-protected, online payment site where tour members register and pay for their tour in increments. Reminders and statements are sent electronically.



TOUR PACKAGE PRICES *you can rely on*

PRICES for a minimum of 30 paying travelers:

\$5265 land package price, double occupancy

\$1605 airfare on United Airlines, non-stop round-trip

PRICES for a minimum of 40 paying travelers:

\$4767 land package price, double occupancy

\$1605 airfare on United Airlines, non-stop round-trip

OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL SERVICES:

\$1585 single supplement

Your tour includes everything above. Here's what's not included:

Passport, official ID, visa or other required travel documents | Immunizations | Fees for extra, oversize or overweight baggage | Luggage handling at airports and hotels | Musical instruments including rental of piano and keyboard | Transportation of oversized instruments | Rehearsal/meeting room | Meals, entrance fees, and coach transfers not mentioned above | Drinks with meals unless specified | Gratuities for tour managers, local guides, coach drivers, hotel staff | Travel insurance (additional information on insurance is enclosed).

TRAVEL PROTECTION is recommended!

Music Contact International recommends purchasing a travel protection plan through [Travel Insured](#). This link is also available online via your Traveler's Resource Site. *Please review coverage options very carefully and contact Travel Insured Inc. directly with any insurance-related questions.*

Pacing & Mobility

We advise you prepare for walking while on tour. Knowledgeable guides will conduct tours on the motorcoach as well as on foot, and there is always a fair bit of walking in historic city centers where busses cannot access, around castles, palaces, museums, and gardens. Please let us know if there are any limitations to mobility within your group. The more we know, the better we can pace this tour for your travelers' comfort.



Register Now! Please bring friends and family - the more the merrier!

MUSIC CONTACT INTERNATIONAL

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