



## Archaeological Itineraries

### 7 Day Itinerary

#### Day 1

[Jerusalem](#): Views from Above and Below

Overview of Jerusalem from the [Mount of Olives](#):

This spiritually significant mountain is also the place for a bird's-eye view of Jerusalem's topography and for understanding how it grew through the ages.



Underground Jerusalem including:

[The Western Wall Tunnel](#) – the original Western Wall of Herod's [Temple Mount](#) over which Jerusalem of later eras was constructed, walking along 1,445 feet of the original, enormous 2,000-year-old Herodian stones, seeing the lofty Warren's Gate, a street and other finds, and a fascinating interactive model.

[The Church of the Holy Sepulchre](#) – most of the complex over the sacred ground marking the tomb of Jesus is a complicated combination of medieval and Byzantine architecture. Deep below the surface are remains going back to a First Temple-era stone quarry and the world-famous and rarely viewed "ship inscription," probably carved by a long-ago pilgrim.



[The City of David](#) – King David's "fortress of Zion" (2. Sam. 5:7), the ongoing excavations include a royal palace, Warren's Shaft, the "water fortress" of the Gihon (1 Kings 1:33), the Second Temple-era Pool of Siloam (John 9:7) and a 2,000-year-old street that once led up to the Temple.

[The Jerusalem Archaeological Park and Davidson Visitor Center](#) – a "still-life" of the original Herodian street, revealing Roman destruction, Robinson's Arch, the Southern Wall and steps to Hulda's Gates; and the Davidson Center, in the basement of an eighth-century-CE palace with its virtual-reconstruction, high-definition interactive model.

[The Tower of David Museum](#) – located at the Jaffa Gate inside the rooms of Jerusalem's Turkish citadel, abutting the huge tower which despite its name was constructed by Jerusalem's master-builder, Herod. Each of the many rooms features exhibits devoted to a different time-period, clarifying the capital's complex history.



#### Day 2

Jerusalem: The Jewish Quarter and Museum Treasures

The [Jewish Quarter](#), including:

Hezekiah's Wall – part of the First Temple-era city wall built over Jerusalem's homes (Isa. 22:10) to protect the city against Assyrian invaders, and which finally fell to the Babylonians.

The Cardo - Jerusalem's main street in the Byzantine and medieval eras, its colonnades and arched chambers now restored as a commercial center and archaeological display.

The Herodian Mansions – restored as a living museum beneath contemporary buildings, with remnants of the fine homes, mosaics, implements of daily life and architecture of the city's wealthy class

before the destruction of the Temple.

[The Burnt House](#) – the basement of a Jerusalem home revealing dramatic evidence of the Katros family who probably lived and worked here, and of Jerusalem's destruction in 70 CE. An audiovisual presentation offers a powerful version of the family's story.

[The Israel Museum](#) – the museum's Archaeology Wing displays rare and world-famous finds from pre-historic times to the Byzantine/Talmudic era; the [Shrine of the Book](#), houses the [Dead Sea Scrolls](#), the oldest copies of the Old Testament ever found and the famed 1:50 [Model of Second Temple Jerusalem](#).

[Bible Lands Museum](#) – a unique collection of ancient treasures mirroring the powerful cultures of Bible days including the Egyptians, the Hittites, the Philistines the Assyrians and others who left their mark on the region and in Scripture.

### Day 3

The Judean Wilderness and the Dead Sea

[Herodium](#) – Herod the Great created this artificial mountain, which he topped with a palace-fortress. Archaeologists have also discovered, huge cisterns, a “playground” pool at the base of the mound, and hideouts for Bar Kokhba's warriors and, recently the grand, long-sought tomb of the king himself.

[Qumran National Park](#)– the ruins on the plateau in sight of the caves where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered are an enigma wrapped in a mystery – were they the home of the Essenes who wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls, a wealthy Sadducee manor farm, or both?

[Massada National Park](#) – Herod's magnificent fortress, with its palaces, bathhouses and ramparts was also the scene of the last stand of the Jews against the Romans in the Great Revolt, attested to by a huge Roman siege ramp and other finds. The combination of its dramatic story and its fabulous architecture and finds has won it recognition as a [World Heritage Site](#).

[The Dead Sea](#) – a rejuvenating rinse-off of the dust of the generations in the lowest, most mineral-rich lake on earth.

### Day 4

The Judean Lowlands: hands-on archaeology and the “tel” of Tel Aviv [Beit Govrin National Park](#) including an Archaeological Seminars excavation of caves that once lay beneath Hellenistic dwellings; the Sidonian Cave, the Roman amphitheater; Tel Mareshah – a city fortified by King Rehoboam of Judah (2 Chron. 11:8) and more.

[Tel Aviv](#) – [Land of Israel Museum](#), with its exhibit of antiquities and contemporary traditional cultures, is itself located next to an ancient mound that is part of the experience – the Philistine Tel Kasila.

[The White City](#) – an evening tour of Tel Aviv's early-20th century Bauhaus monuments that have earned recognition as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

## Day 5

From the Mediterranean Coast to Galilee

[Caesarea National Park](#) – “Queen of the Coast” – Herod's showcase city, including the amphitheater; the theater; Byzantine walls; the “bird mosaic”; the Crusader city, the aqueduct and more.

[Megiddo National Park](#) – King Solomon's regional capital (1 Kings 9:15), Megiddo's fortifications, water system, palaces, stables and dwellings spanning thousands of years and its great biblical significance have made it a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

[Beit She'arim National Park](#) – Talmudic-era catacombs with huge, decorated stone sarcophagi, where sages and leaders from across the ancient world were laid to rest, are just part of the fascinating antiquities of this city, one of the places where the Sanhedrin had its headquarters.

[Acre](#) – this medieval gem on the Mediterranean retains a 900-year-old urban plan. The capital of the Crusaders after the fall of Jerusalem, Acre's ramparts overlooking the sea, its [Knights Halls](#), fishermen's port, Turkish Bath Museum, bazaar and mosque over a gigantic medieval water cistern have all contributed to this city's selection as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

## Day 6

Around the Sea of Galilee

[Bet She'an National Park](#) – the biblical mound containing remains of the city to which the Philistines brought the bodies of Saul and his three sons (1 Sam. 31:10), and capital of the Greco-Roman alliance of cities known as the Decapolis, Bet Shean boasts colonnaded streets, mosaics, temples, fountains, pools, a theater, an amphitheater and more.

[Tiberias](#) - The present-day capital of the [Sea of Galilee](#), built by Herod Antipas and once the headquarters of the Sanhedrin, [ancient Tiberias](#) is now undergoing excavation that will one day reveal in all their glory its market streets, colonnades, theater and more treasures. Visit the dig, as well as [Hamat Tiberias National Park](#) – the remains of a magnificent synagogue mosaic and Mount Berenice – the Anchor Church.

[Capernaum](#) – the first of the three cities of the “evangelical triangle” (including Bethsaida and Korazim) to return from historical oblivion, with Byzantine and Roman remains of a synagogue, a church and dwellings that raise many interesting questions and illustrate New Testament stories.

[Bethsaida](#) – excavations are underway of the Roman city that figured centrally in the ministry of Jesus, and of huge remains of the biblical city of Geshur, hometown of David's wife Maacah (2 Sam. 3:3).

[Korazim National Park](#) – an early Talmudic-era synagogue that is interesting to compare to Capernaum's, with the replica of its original Moses Seat, a ritual bath, dwellings and other elements that bring alive Talmudic descriptions of community life.

## Day 7

From Dan to the Golan

[Dan Nature Reserve](#) – one of the finest examples of a biblical city and the capital of the Northern Kingdom, Dan's “Abraham Gate” (Gen. 14:14) is the

second-oldest arch in the world. Also visit the Israelite gateway and the High Place of Jeroboam in their tranquil Dan River setting.

[Katzrin](#) – a Talmudic-era Golan Heights village, Katzrin's reconstructed house and synagogue create a three-dimensional perspective on ancient life.

[Gamla](#) Nature Reserve – called “the Masada of the north” because of Josephus' description of its famous last stand, a hike leads to Gamla, which boasts remains of the earliest synagogue ever found, ramparts that held back the Romans, and olive presses that were the town's livelihood.

Umm el-Qanatir – a Talmudic-era town with unusual synagogue remains and unique finds, this site is now undergoing excavation using cutting-edge techniques and technology.