



Culture and History Itineraries

7-Day Tour

Day 1

Start with [Tel Aviv-Jaffa](#):

Wander through the lanes of ancient Jaffa and enjoy the galleries, the underground archaeological display and the picturesque fishing port.

Proceed to Neve Tsedek, the first Jewish neighborhood outside ancient Jaffa. Neve Tsedek is the home of the Suzanne Dellal Centre for Dance and Theatre, the world-famous Bat Sheva Dance Company and a number of restored homes and shops with interesting architecture. Among these is the museum dedicated to the works of the early Tel Aviv artist who captured its spirit in the early days, [Nahum Gutman](#).



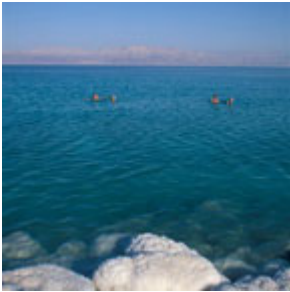
Speaking of architecture, in July 2003, UNESCO proclaimed the cluster of homes and public buildings of Tel Aviv's founding days as a [World Heritage Site](#). A stroll through the main area of these monuments, known as the "[White City](#)," along Rothschild Blvd. and its side streets is a wonderful opportunity to savor life in the first Hebrew city, past and present.

On Tuesdays and Fridays, see the Nahalat Binyamin pedestrian mall come alive with stalls selling handicrafts of every type.

Proceed to the [Tel Aviv Museum of Art](#) and visit the Israeli Art section for a taste of Israel's finest art from the past 100 years.

Enjoy the nightlife of a city that never sleeps.

Overnight in Tel Aviv



Day 2

Drive south to Tel [Be'er Sheva](#), another of the many UNESCO's World Heritage Sites on this itinerary. This ancient town, overlooking the modern capital of the [Negev](#) that has retained the ancient name, functioned as the administrative center for the Judean monarchy during the Iron Age, beginning some 2,800 years ago. Among the most impressive finds here are the corner stones of an altar and a large-scale water project that served the city during both war and peace.

Continue south to [Sde Boker](#), a kibbutz in the central Negev and the home of Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion. Visit [Ben-Gurion's modest home](#) and the nearby exhibition portraying his life and his vision for this region, and stop at his [tomb](#), overlooking the magnificent Tsin Valley.



Proceed to [Avdat](#), once a central city on the Nabatean trade route (known as the Incense Route) connecting Petra and the port of Gaza.

From here, it is a two-hour trip to Jerusalem.

Overnight in Jerusalem

Day 3

Start out with an overview, literal and figurative, of the Holy City, Israel's capital, as you explore the [Tower of David Museum](#), showcasing the history of Jerusalem from its beginning to modern times.

Continue to the [Jewish Quarter](#) which was home to European and Sephardic Jews during the centuries under Ottoman rule, and visit the 2,700-year-old Broad Wall, the Herodian Mansions and the Cardo.

See the [Western Wall](#), sacred to the Jewish people as the last remnant of the Second Temple. Visit the Southern Wall Excavations, walking on the original two thousand-year old street and climbing the ancient steps. At the [Davidson Center](#), in the basement of an eighth-century CE palace, make arrangements to see the virtual-reconstruction, high-definition interactive model.

Next, explore the venerable [Church of the Holy Sepulchre](#), site of the crucifixion and tomb of Jesus according to Christian tradition. You will notice the many Christian denominations represented in the church, distinguished by their dress and liturgy – Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Armenian, Coptic, Ethiopian, and Syrian Orthodox, each in their own corner of the ancient complex.

Wander through the Old City markets, steeping yourself in its sights, sounds and aromas, and try your hand at hunting and bargaining for treasures.

Overnight in Jerusalem

Day 4

Start the day with a Visit to the [Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial](#). Walk through the astounding new Museum with its new and moving focus on the individual in the Holocaust, the Children's Memorial and Hall of Remembrance.

Drive through the New City viewing old and new neighborhoods, the [Knesset](#) (The Israeli Parliament, open for visits on Sundays and Thursdays) and the beautifully designed [Supreme Court building](#).

At the nearby [Israel Museum](#), among many other fascinating exhibits discover the mysteries of the [Dead Sea Scrolls](#) at the [Shrine of the Book](#) and see the [Second Temple Model of Jerusalem](#).

Finish the day with optional evening tours that explore the development of Jerusalem from the 19th century on. (Must be pre-arranged; can be booked through the concierge at your hotel.)

Overnight in Jerusalem

Day 5

Drive to the [Dead Sea](#) area and visit [Qumran](#), where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered. Don't miss the audiovisual presentation that shows how the ancients lived there life here.

Continue to [Ein Gedi](#) and hike through its [Nature Reserve](#) to the beautiful waterfall.

In the afternoon, ascend to [Massada](#), Herod's magnificent fortress, with its palaces, bathhouses and ramparts. Massada 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. Don't miss the new museum at the Visitors Center that reveals the secrets of the daily lives of the rebels, tells the story of the excavations and shows why Massada became one of Israel's most important symbols.

Overnight in Jerusalem

Day 6

Leaving Jerusalem, drive along the coast and cut through the historic Iron Valley to [Tel Megiddo](#). Home to a palace and walls of Solomon, a complex water system built by King Ahab, scene of Armageddon and believed to be the backdrop for Leon Uris' novel "The Source," Megiddo is one of Israel's most important and impressive archaeological sites, also a World Heritage Site.

Continue to the northwestern shore of the [Sea of Galilee](#) and visit the [Galilee's](#) cradle of Christianity - [Capernaum](#), Simon Peter's home town, [Tabha](#), commemorating the miracle of the Fishes and Loaves, and the [Mount of the Beatitudes](#), the scene of the Sermon on the Mount.

Consider the option of a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee this evening.

Overnight: in the Sea of Galilee area

Day 7

Head into the [Galilee](#) mountains to spend the morning in [Safed](#), one of the four holy cities in Israel and the home of Lurian mysticism, a branch of Jewish mysticism conceived by the 16th - century Rabbi Isaac Luria, the traditional author of the seminal mystic work, the Zohar. Stroll along the lanes of the Old City and see its many synagogues, as well as its unique artist's colony.

Drive out to the Mediterranean coast to spend the afternoon in [Acre](#), a historic walled port-city with continuous settlement beginning in the Phoenician period. The remains of the Crusader town, dating from 1104 to 1291, lie almost intact both above and below today's street level. The remains provide an exceptional picture of the layout and structures of the capital of the medieval Crusader kingdom, along with touches of the Ottoman period during the 18th and 19th centuries, when Acre was a fortified market town.

Explore the [Knights Halls](#), the [Al-Jazaar Mosque](#), the [bathhouse](#) with its multi-media display, and the new ethnic museum, built right into the rooms of the old wall.