



## Naturally Israel

### A 7-Day Itinerary

#### Day 1

Start your trip in at [Mount Hermon](#) in Israel's far north, and work your way south. The Hermon's highest peak is at 9230 feet, with the highest point inside Israel at Mitspe Shelagim (7,295 feet). Mount Hermon is the only place in the country with snow-skiing (winter only). In the summer you can enjoy, hiking and horseback-riding on the Hermon's alpine slopes.



Other year-round pleasures of nature include the beautiful lake of [Birket Ram](#), and the refreshing hike that connects the [Banias River](#), a tributary of the Jordan at an ancient Roman site, to the thundering Banias Waterfall.

Continue to the [Hula Valley](#) Nature Reserve. The reserve has lovely walking trails, including a "floating bridge" over the wetland, and special lookout points where visitors can observe the avian wildlife.

In the spring of 1994 another stage in the campaign to restore natural balance in the Hula Valley was completed: the re-flooding of 250 acres now known as Lake Agmon, located approximately two kilometers north of the Hula Nature Reserve. Visitors can visit the re-flooded area to appreciate nature's powers.



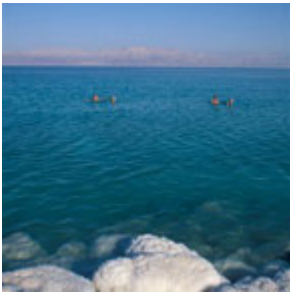
While at the Hula Valley Nature reserve don't forget to stop at Oforia, a fun multimedia display that tells the story of the migratory route across the region and the millions of birds that use it.

Continue south to Israel's largest fresh-water lake, the [Sea of Galilee](#).

Overnight around the Sea of Galilee

#### Day 2

Ascend back into the mountains of Upper [Galilee](#) and hike the Summit Trail on [Mount Meron](#) with its breathtaking panoramas.



Continue along Israel's northern road all the way to [Rosh Hanikra](#). Here the rocky cliffs descend steeply into the Mediterranean Sea, allowing the waves to carve grottos of a thousand shapes. Take the cable car down to the grottos for a short stroll through the rocky passageways.

In the late afternoon, drive to [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, providing an exceptional picture of the layout and structures of the capital of the medieval Crusader kingdom, along with touches of the Ottoman fortified market town Acre was during the 18th and 19th centuries. Wander through the markets with their spice shops, fresh fruits and vegetables and other treats, walk along the old ramparts by the sea and enjoy sunset over the Mediterranean.

Overnight in Haifa region

### Day 3

Drive past the modern port-city of [Haifa](#) to the [Carmel](#) ridge via the Druze towns of [Daliat El Carmel](#) and [Isfiya](#). Enjoy a morning hike in "Little Switzerland," a nature reserve dedicated to the preservation of Israel's Mediterranean forest.

Drive southeast through the Jezreel Valley, passing the ancient city of [Megiddo](#). Continue to the Beit She'an Valley and visit one of the most impressive archaeological sites in Israel: the ancient biblical city of [Beit She'an](#), which the Greeks and Romans knew as Scythopolis.

Continue to Kibbutz Kfar Rupin and join one of the tours offered by the [International Bird Watching Center of the Jordan Valley](#). (Tours must be prearranged; for more information see:

<http://www.birdwatching.org.il/index2.htm>)

Proceed to Jerusalem via the Jordan Valley.

Overnight in Jerusalem

### Day 4

Start the day with a visit to the [City of David](#), the heart of biblical [Jerusalem](#), to view Area G, [Warren's Shaft](#), the water fortress and the new Visitors Center.

Walk through the water of Hezekiah's Tunnel, dug 2,700 years ago to secure the water flow for Jerusalem during the Assyrian siege.

Enter the [Old City](#) via the Dung Gate to visit the [Western Wall](#), the holiest site in the world for Jews. Tour the excavations at the Southern Wall, including ritual baths and the original streets of Jerusalem from the time of Jesus. Sit on the southern steps of the Temple, used by hundreds of thousands of pilgrims 2,000 years ago as they ascended to the [Temple Mount](#). Visit the [Davidson Center](#), in the basement of an eighth-century CE palace, and make arrangements to visit its virtual reconstruction, high-definition interactive model.

Cross the valley to the [Jewish Quarter](#) and enter the Herodian Mansions, the dwellings of the priestly families who served in the Temple. See evidence of First-Temple Jerusalem at the Broad Wall, as well as the Late Roman Cardo and the medieval synagogues.

Overnight in Jerusalem

### Day 5

Start your day at the [Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial](#), with its astounding museum and other moving exhibits, including the Children's Memorial and the Hall of Remembrance.

Drive through the new city viewing old and new neighborhoods, the [Knesset](#) and [Supreme Court](#). In the Rose Garden opposite the Knesset is the [Jerusalem Bird Observatory](#), Israel's first urban wildlife site ([www.jbo.org.il](http://www.jbo.org.il). Tel. 052-386-9488).

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.](#)

Visit the [Biblical Zoo](#) to enjoy the fabulous array of animals Israel is helping the worldwide effort in fostering.

Leave time for a late-afternoon visit to Mahaneh Yehuda, the capital's open-air produce market. Enjoy a break for coffee, hummus and pita, or even a great meal, while you take in the sights, sounds and aromas of Jerusalem.

Overnight in Jerusalem

### **Day 6**

Drive east towards the [Dead Sea](#) and then south along its western shore. Your first stop is [Metsoke Deragot](#) (stepped cliffs), offering a variety of extreme sports activities, safari, jeep tours and rappelling. (Must be prearranged; for more information see: <http://www.metzoke.co.il/English.aspx>).

Continue to the oasis of [Ein Gedi](#) where you can enjoy a choice of hikes. The short trail will take you into Nahal David (the David riverbed), the longer trail to Nahal Arugot (the Arugot riverbed). Both hikes offer plenty of shade, water and small pools where you can stop to cool off.

End the day at one of the spa hotels along the shores of the Dead Sea and pamper yourself by choosing from among the variety of treatments based on the water and the unique combination of 21 minerals of the Dead Sea.

Overnight in the Dead Sea area

### **Day 7**

This morning, beat the heat (especially in summer!) with an early-morning climb to [Massada](#) via the Snake Path. Drive northeast to the Dead Sea, to explore Massada, scene of the epic stand by Jewish rebels at the end of the great revolt against Rome nearly 2,000 years ago. The new museum at the visitor's center reveals the secrets of the daily life of the rebels, the story of the excavations, and how the site became one of Israel's most important symbols.

From Massada it is a 1.5-hour drive to Jerusalem and a 2.5-hour drive to [Tel Aviv](#).