Journey to Israel The Land of the Bible 11-day Holy Land Tour



with Tour Host



Rev. Dino and Doris Loida Espinoza

February 19 - March 1, 2013



Day 1, Tuesday, Feb 19—Depart from San Antonio for your overnight flight to Tel Aviv.

<u>Day 2, Wednesday, Feb 20</u>— We arrive at Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv in the late afternoon. Time permitting, we visit Jaffa, one of the oldest cities in the world and the port where the prophet Jonah set sail for Tar Shish, before arriving at our hotel.

Day 3, Thursday, Feb 21—We begin our day at Caesarea Maritima. We will see a well-preserved Roman Amphitheater, still used for concerts today, remains from Herods Palace and a Hippodrome that seated 10,000 spectators where horse races, special events and games took place. See the aqueducts built by Herod that brought ample water to supply thousands of Caesarea citizens. We will visit Mt.Carmel, where Elijah challenged the 450 prophets of Baal and as fire consumed the altar the people declared that the Lord is God. We continue to Sepphoris, near Nazareth, which served as the region's capital and where Jesus and his family would have traded goods and perhaps attended religious studies. We then continue to our hotel in Tiberias.

Day 4, Friday, Feb 22—Start today with a special time of worship as we sail across the Sea of Galilee in a replica boat of 2,000 years. We visit the ancient boat discovered by two fishermen in 1986. Next we travel to Capernaum, the center of Jesus activities in the Galilee and home to Peter, Andrew, James and John. We see the ancient synagogue where Jesus taught and explore the archeological gardens. We will walk on the Mount of Beatitudes, the traditional site of the Sermon on the Mount. Time permitting, we will drive to Banias, the site of biblical Caesarea Philippi. Before returning to our hotel in Tiberias, we will have an opportunity for water baptism in the Jordan River.

Day 5, Saturday, Feb 23—Leaving the Galilee area, we will drive down the Jordan Valley to explore the latest excavations at Beit Shean, Israel's largest excavation. See an ancient city that included public areas, agora, theaters, bathhouses, markets, massive columns that line the main street, reflecting pools and residential homes. It was on the walls of Beit Shean that the Philistines hung the bodies of King Saul and his sons. Visit the natural springs where Gideon brought ten thousand to be tested. Continuing down the Jordan Valley, we drive by Jericho and the Mount of Temptations then stop at Kaser El Yahud, believed to be the site where Jesus was baptized by John. We continued to the lowest place on earth, the Dead Sea. We will stop at Oumran, site of the Dead Sea Scrolls discovery. Then to Ein Gedi to see the waterfalls where David hid from Saul. Continue to the Dead Sea hotel for an evening of relaxation, take advantage of the Spa facilities, or "float" in the therapeutic Dead Sea water.

Day 6, Sunday, Feb 24—After a morning of leisure, we visit Masada where we will ascend by cable car to tour the famous archaeological site, an ancient fortress, where Jewish Zealots made their last stand against Rome in 73 CE. We continue to Jerusalem and arrive at Mt. Scopus for a magnificent view of the Golden City. We will offer a traditional blessing as was done during the time of Christ before arriving at our Jerusalem hotel.

Day 7, Monday, Feb 25—Today we begin at the Mt. of Olives where we will hear an explanation of the city, then walk down the Palm Sunday road to the Garden of Gethsemane. At Mt. Zion we visit the Church of St. Peter in Galacantu, Caiaphas' House where Jesus was held before trial, and see ancient steps cut into the hill that led to the city, a path Jesus may have used. We enter the Old City through the Dung Gate to visit the Western Wall for a personal time of reflection and prayer. Then we walk through the Western Wall Tunnel to see remarkable underground excavation of ancient Jerusalem. We will walk along distinctively carved and well-preserved Herodian stones that weigh over 100 tons, one of the stones being the largest ever quarried by man, 400 tons. We end our day in Bethlehem, the birthplace of our Savior.

Day 8, Tuesday, Feb 26—Circumstances permitting, we begin our day on the Temple Mount. Then, see the Pools of Bethesda, where Jesus healed the lame man. We will walk through the Old City following the Via Dolorosa to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. In the Jewish Quarters we see the ancient Roman Cardo, and visit the remains from Hezekiah's Wall. At the Herodian Mansion we will walk through archeological remains of a six-house compound. These were homes of Aristocratic and Temple Priest families that were destroyed with the destruction of the 2nd Temple in 70 AD. Then we visit the Temple Institute, an organization that is preparing tools and vessels for the future Jewish Temple. We end our day at the Davidson Center where we will enjoy a virtual tour of the Second Temple and explore the Temple Southern Steps. These steps were the only entrance to the Temple during the time of Christ.

Day 9, Wednesday, Feb 27—Traveling just outside of Jerusalem, we will visit the Elah valley, site of David and Goliath. Next we visit Tel Maresha, an amazing site and on going excavation of an ancient village built by King Rehoboam. There are approximately 5,000 caves around Tel Maresha, many linked by an intricate underground network of passageways. The grounds were used as quarries, burial grounds, storerooms for animals, workshops and spaces for raising doves and pigeons. Part of Tel Maresha is Beit Guvrin Caves, a series of 80 large caves, ancient quarried caves that made a unique bell shape with excellent acoustics. We return to Jerusalem for overnight.

Day 10, Thursday, Feb 28—A later start this morning as you prepare for your flight home and check out of the hotel. We then walk through Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Museum, in memory of the millions murdered by the Nazis. We then visit the Israel Museum and see the Holy Land Model, a miniature replica of Jerusalem during the time of Christ, and the Dead Sea Scrolls. We will end our time in Jerusalem at one of the sites believed to be the burial site of Jesus, the Garden Tomb. We enjoy a time of worship and communion, a highlight of our tour. A special dinner is planned as we conclude our Israel journey. We then transfer to the airport for late night departure from Tel Aviv

Day 11, Friday, Mar 1—After a change of planes in New York, we arrive home with a life time of memories.

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Price of Tour Includes

Round trip airfare from San Antonio on Delta Airlines, breakfast and dinner daily, special farewell dinner, eight amazing full days of sightseeing, all entrance fees on itinerary, Israeli guide, porters at hotels, deluxe motor coach and driver, eight nights first class (4-star) hotels, airport transfers, tips to driver, guide and hotel staff, tax and fuel surcharge at current rate* (subject to change) tour price is cash/check discounted rate

Not Included

Lunches, bottled water or beverages, single room, travel insurance, personal items, use of credit cards for tour payments

Please Note: Airline Taxes and Fuel Surcharge* are

included in the tour price. The current rate is \$650. This fee is set by the airline and Madison Tours has no control nor receives advance notice of changes. Due to fluctuating oil prices, the fee may change. The airline will only guarantee the fee at time of ticketing, about six weeks before departure. If the airline impose an increase, the difference will be collected before departure.

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Feb 19 - Mar 1, 2013	●Tour Code: DE0213
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