Israel THE HIDDEN GEMS

Trilogy * Volume I

North * Centre * South









Volume One of the Hidden Gems Trilogy covers the Northern part of the country (as shaded above) showcasing experiences, places and people that are unique to the region. We invite you to explore the pages of Volume One and discover an innovative approach to tourism in Israel. Volume Two and Three covering Central and Southern Israel will be published in early 2012.

Published on behalf of the Israel Government Tourist Office, United Kingdom and Ireland by ERETZ Magazine. Project managed for and on behalf of IGTO by Absolute Publishing Ltd.

Concept and design: ERETZ Magazine Copy: Yadin Roman, Heidi Gleit Copy Editor: Sophie Conn-Taylor Designers: Einat Rogel, Rotem Le

Copy Editor: Sophie Conn-Taylor Designers: Einat Rogel, Rotem Leviad Photographers: Yadin Roman, Doron Horowitz, Chen Haklai, Efrat Nakash, ERETZ Magazine Archive, Dita Kohl Roman, Ya'acov Shkolnik, Jostein Skevik, Alberto Peral, Gilad BenAri

First Edition: November 2011

The contents of this publication and in particular any suggested holidays, tours or itineraries are subject to change at any time and are for general guidance only. IGTO, the Israel Ministry of Tourism, tour operators and service providers will not be responsible for any claims for

misrepresentation or otherwise in relation to your reliance on this publication.

Content, photographs, design copyright © Eretz Ha-Tzvi 2011. All rights reserved to Eretz Ha-Tzvi Ltd. Eretz Ha-Tzvi Inc., 5 Ma'avar Yabok Street, Tel Aviv 67440, Israel. www. eretz.com

All rights reserved, including translation into other languages. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying or otherwise, without the prior permission of ERETZ Ha-Tzvi Ltd. The publishers, producers, and writers of this guide disclaim any responsibility for the conditions of the places, routes, and sites described herein or for the safety or security conditions in the area. Visitors touring the area or following the routes described in this guide do so at their own risk.

⋆ Contents ⋆

The Hidden Gems of Israel	7
The North of Israel, the Galilee	8
Israel Map: North	10
Carmel Mountains	13
Secluded Coves The Carmel Coast Hilltop Villages	
Along the Crest The Baron's Legacy Zichron Ya'acov	
Haifa	21
From Refineries to Gardens	
Acre	25
Knights & Merchants Old City of Acre	
Galilee Coast	29
Purple Dye Rosh Hanikra	
Jezreel Valley	33
Pharaoh & Prophet Megiddo, Tabor	
Mongol Spears The Harod Valley	
Sea of Galilee	39
The Last Stand Hattin & Tiberias Evangelical Triangle	
Northern Shores Baths of Aphrodite Hot Springs	
Mary's Well Nazareth Kibbutz Land Kinnrot Valley	
The Hula Valley	51
The Cornerstone Rosh Pina The North Star	
The Jordan The Rift Rim Naftali Range	
Green Mountains	59
Shabbat Bride Safed Sages & Saints Miracle Makers	
Perched Villages Pekei'n Beit Jann Starkenberg Heroic Cas	tles
Festivals and Pilgrimages	69
October Press Olive Festival Run along the Lake	
Galilee Marathon Alternative Theatre Acco Festival	
Haifa International Film Festival Lag Ba'omer	
Ascent to Meron Hula Bird Festival Winter Migrants	
Taking Time: Rambling Through Galilee	82
To Love Bay and Beyond Rabbi Yossi Hagalili's	
Neighbourhood Yiftah Canyon to Goma Junction	
Keshet to Sharach	
Index	92



The Hidden Gems of Israel

Israel is not a large country. You can drive from its northern border to its southern tip in less than 10 hours. From east to west, it will take you less than two hours. But this small territory contains an unimaginable wealth of natural landscapes and historical treasures as well as a rich cultural heritage.

Forested mountains, fertile valleys, colourful deserts, and beautiful coastline are all within a one-day drive of each other. Archaeological sites dot the landscape, echoing famous names and momentous events in world history. The alphabet was invented in this land, as was agriculture, urban centres, cemeteries and private houses. This was the land where the concept of social justice was formulated and the existence of a Kingdom of Heaven revealed, together with prophecy and divine miracles.

Divine manifestation has always been part of this land. Kings and prophets, warriors and saviours, holy men and wise sages have left their historical imprint in the valleys, deserts and mountains of this small country. Judaism and Christianity came into being in this land where God walked with humans. The variety of people is one of the ingredients that have made this land so fascinating. Hebrews and Philistines, Phoenicians, Christians, Muslim and Jewish sects, Romans, Arabs, Crusaders, Mongols and Turks have all inhabited this land. The modern people of Israel are made up of communities from over 120 different countries, each with its own culture and heritage.

In addition to its treasure of world heritage, Israel offers outstanding travel opportunities for the discerning traveller. Enjoy its luxury hideaways for the perfect holiday; world-class wineries next door to boutique producers of olive oil and cheese; spas, resorts and retreats — to heal body and soul; year-round outdoor activities; culinary treasures; and spiritual experiences coupled with a vibrant Mediterranean cultural heritage of nightlife, festivals and events. This guide is about these hidden gems of Israel — ideas for the traveller seeking unique and rewarding experiences. We invite you to join us in exploring Israel: a journey of discovery to a unique and exciting destination.





Stas Misezhnikov Minister of Tourism Israel





Galilee: The North of Israel

The Galilee is not a large region. A mere 100 kilometres separate its northern border — on the sources of the Jordan — from its southernmost boundary along the Jezreel Plain, the site of biblical Armageddon. Its eastern reaches, on the edge of the Golan plateau, lie only 70 kilometres from the Mediterranean Sea in the west. But these 7,000 square kilometres encompass amazingly beautiful and contrasting scenery: mountains and valleys, fertile plateaus and stark cliffs, and a glimmering seacoast. The Galilee is a region where it is possible to trace the long ascent of man from his early beginnings to what he has become today. Prehistoric skeletons found in the Galilee show that in this place, man developed the ability to speak. Here, too, man made the transition from hunter and gatherer to farmer — and the very first permanent villages were erected. Six thousand years ago, the Galilee was already bustling with human activity. The forests were cleared, and replaced with farms and villages. On the plains, cities sprung up. Some 3,500 years ago, Joshua and the Israelite tribes conquered the Galilee and settled there, side by side with the pagan indigenous population. The haunting mountains of the Galilee were the abode of Elijah, the greatest of all biblical prophets. Later on, the Galilee









became the home of the elusive 'men of deeds' — Jewish healers and miracle workers. Jesus came from the Galilee, as did Peter, Andrew, John, and Bartholomew. The Galilee was the birthplace of Jewish mysticism. Shimon bar Yohai, the first Jewish mystic, lived in the Galilee in the second century CE. In the sixteenth century, Safed became the birthplace of Kabbalah. The charismatic Yitzhak Ashkenazi Luria, the 'Lion of Safed', drew hundreds of followers who flocked to Galilee to learn how to unravel the mystery of the Godhead.

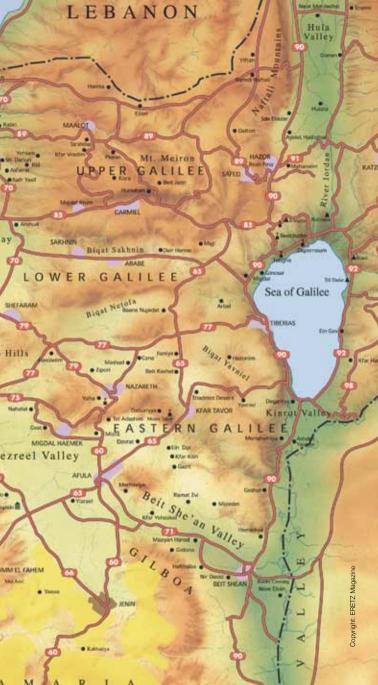
Why has the Galilee been the domain of mystical manifestations throughout history? Perhaps it has to do with the proximity of the people of the Galilee to nature. Perhaps it is the beauty: lake and snow, coastline and fertile valleys, green fields and mountain slopes.

The Galilee is still a relatively unknown destination. But in the past few years its ancient towns have been preserved and quaint villages have opened their doors to visitors. It is a place to take in slowly, a place to sit in the shade of an ancient olive tree, bask in the sun on a quiet beach, or walk along a cobblestone lane still echoing with the footsteps of centuries. Its mystical atmosphere takes the visitor far away from the frenetic world we live in today, its Hidden Gems are waiting to be discovered.





Galilee North DCHRON VAAKOV MENASHE BINYAMINA OR ARIVA HEDERA BAKA EL GARBIYA BAKA EL SHARKIYA







Carmel Mountains: God's Vineyard

From the secluded sea coves of the Carmel coast, where ancient mariners used to haunt the waters of Caesarea, to the picturesque nineteenth-century homesteads of the farmers of Zichron Ya'akov overlooking the vineyards of the small Carmel valleys, this is the place to start your Galilean journey. Spend time at the sandy Mediterranean beaches, enjoy the sunset from a seaside café, or drive through one of Israel's foremost wine-producing areas.



Antiquity Museum

Collection of artifacts from excavations at Caesarea hidden between the houses of Sedot Yam including a colonnaded garden overgrown with vines.

Kibbutz Sedot Yam,
Tel.: (04) 636-4367

The Glass Factory

Built by Baron Rothschild to make bottles for his winery, the factory now houses artifacts found in the sea, from sunken bullion to Napoleon's guns. Kibbutz Nahsholim, Tel.: (04) 639-0950, www.mizgaga.com

Janco-Dada Museum

The place to be enlightened about the Dada movement and the work of Marcel Janco. Ein Hod Artists' Village, Tel.: (04) 984-2350.

Secluded Coves The Carmel Coast

Start the day at Caesarea, King Herod's urban masterpiece on the Mediterranean, Take your fill of the ancient theatre, amphitheatre, hippodrome, and harbour in the archaeology park (www.caesarea. com). Follow this with a few hours at the heach of Dor, without a doubt the most beautiful beach in Israel, or for a more secluded experience, continue northward to Habonim beach. A trail along the coastline leads to the ancient Phoenician city of Dor. For the more agile, the agueduct beach at Caesarea is a romantic option. The aqueduct runs along the beach for two miles before turning inland to the Roman dam over Crocodile River. If you continue along the beach to the north, you will reach ancient Crocodopolis. standing guard over the mouth of this small river. The last crocodile was seen here a century ago. but the thousands of water fowl make up for the missing wildlife.

Active Suggestions



Caesarea Golf Club

The keen golfer must stop off for a quick round at the only golf course in Israel, recently redesigned by Pete Dye. Tel.: (04) 617-4444, www.caesarea.com

Makura Ranch

A horse ride along the beach at sunset is one of the most enriching ways to experience the scenery along the Carmel Coast. *Tel.:* (054) 433-0606, info@makura.co.il



Finally, drive to Ein Hod, the artist's village home to many studios and galleries. Visit the Janco-Dada Museum that exhibits the works of Marcel Janco together with an overview of the Dada movement. Check out the Nisco Museum of Mechanical Music, take a tour of the galleries, or stroll through the village on your own. End the visit at Art Bar, the local microbrewery, to find out more about beer brewing and enjoy a tasting session of local beers.



Late Night

Caesarea Harbour

After the National Park at Caesarea closes for the day at 5pm, the harbour opens for business. A line of restaurants along the shore, coffee houses, shops and little studios attract patrons from near and far.

Caesarea Harbour,
Caesarea National Park

Roman Theatre

The ancient Roman theatre serves as a venue for some of the most exciting concerts in Israel. July and August are the main performance months when the best of Israel's singers and musicians play here. Catch a performance by Shlomo Artzi, Eyal Golan and others. The captivated and participating audience is part of the reason to snatch up any tickets available.

Dining Out

Helena

Overlooking the beach at Caesarea port this outstanding restaurant offers meat, fish and seafood dishes.

Caesarea Port

Tel.: (057) 944-3013

Agenda

Located at the Paz Gas Station off the main highway, this is an excellent restaurant. Paz Gas Station Entrance Rabin Power Station Travel Time:
Full Day
Distance:
20 km
Best Months:
All Year



O Druze Heritage House

The former home of the British Christian Zionist Laurence Oliphant now houses an exhibit focusing on the life of the Druze community consisting of tools, weapons, clothing, foods, and more.

Eighth Street, Daliyat el-Carmel,
Tel.: (04) 839-3242

A Hai Bar Carmel

This 1,500-acre centre is dedicated to the revival of the Carmel's indigenous wildlife, and taking steps to reintroduce species that vanished from the wild in Israel over a century ago. Open on Saturdays only (or for different times, by prior arrangement for groups). 300 metres south of the entrance to the University of Haifa, Tel.: (04) 832-0648

Hilltop Villages Along the Crest

Druze is a religious sect that splintered from Islam in the tenth century. The religious beliefs and practices are semi-secret and the Druze community is scattered in mountaintop villages throughout Lebanon, Syria, and northern Israel. Two of the community's most interesting villages are located on the crest of the Carmel. overlooking Haifa Bay and the mountains of Galilee. 'Isfiya is only a few kilometres from Haifa. Drive along the winding road that leads from Atlit to Reit Oren or take the main Carmel road that descends from the University of Haifa. The impressive ancient quarter in the centre of 'Isfiva boasts several old, traditional-style buildings, an olive press, and a candle-making workshop. The village's main street bazaar is filled with a variety of colourful shops, and nearby restaurants which serve spicy ethnic foods. To learn about authentic Druze culture, try staying







at one of the Druze guesthouses and enjoy traditional foods, listen to stories, and watch music and dance performances. Continue the Druze adventure by driving to Daliyat el-Carmel — 'Isfiya's larger sister village whose main street is a mecca for weekend shoppers. Continue to the Carmelite monastery at Mukhraka (Tel.: (05) 2877-9686), where the prophet Elijah slaughtered the prophets of the Ba'al. Return via scenic road from the monastery to Nesher.



Carmel Hikes

Nahal Yagur

From the centre of Usfiya follow the trail marked in red to the village spring (Ein al Balad). Continue on the trail into the canyon of Nahal Yagur, which will take you through the natural forest, dry waterfalls and a beautiful canyon to Kibbutz Yagur. Make sure that someone is waiting to pick you up at the kibbutz if you don't want to walk back.

Carmel Man

A series of caves where some of the earliest remains of *Homo Sapiens* were found, including a 100,000-year-old cemetery. Today it's a national park with a souvenir shop and sound-and-light show. The circular hike into the riverbed is a nice detour.

Carmel Caves National Park



Travel Time:
4 hours
Distance:
30 km
Best Months:
Dec-May



Ohel Yaakov Synagogue

Established by Baron Rothschild in 1886, the Ohel Ya'akov Synagogue in Zichron Ya'acov is one of the best examples of the quaint nineteenth-century synagogues built in the Land of Israel.

Corner of Hanadiv and Hameyasdim streets, Tel.: 054-551-2197, www.ohelyaakov.com

@ Beit Aaronson

The home of Aaron Aaronsohn, who led the NILI underground with his sister during the twilight of the Ottoman Empire, has been carefully preserved. Visitors can learn about the NILI and life in Zichron Ya'acov's early years while perusing the family's personal possessions. 40 Hameyasdim St. Tel.: (04) 639-0120

Venues and More



Shuni Fortress

Once a Roman amphitheater, this ancient fortress boasts several museums, a restaurant, and also is used as a concert venue. Tel.: (04) 638-9730

The Baron's Legacy Zichron Ya'acov

The road from Binyamina to Zichron Ya'acov is replete with wineries supplied with grapes from the vineyards of the surrounding Nadiv Valley. Visit Ramat Hanadiv (Tel.: (04) 629-8111, www.ramathanadiv.org.il), the beautiful garden and nature park that is the final resting place of Baron Edmund de Rothschild, and then drive to the picturesque town of 7ichron Ya'acov. The two main streets of the old town centre have been turned into a pedestrian mall and the nineteenth-century farmhouses along them help evoke the atmosphere of its early years. Ouaint restaurants, coffee shops, art galleries, and souvenir shops line the two streets. Off the main street, in the backyards of the old farmsteads, are more art galleries along with artists' studios and workshops. Two of the original buildings have been turned into museums: Beit Aaronson is dedicated to the history of the

Beit Daniel

Daniel House was a famous retreat for artists, today the beautiful garden is a venue for academic conferences.

Broshim St. Zichron



NILI underground movement and the Museum of the First Aliya (2 Hanadiv St, Tel.: (04) 629-4777) focuses on the Jewish immigrants who came to the Land of Israel between 1882 and 1904. From its founding in the 1880s, Zichron has been a center of viticulture. The original 1889 winery still stands at the southern entrance to Zichron Ya'acov and includes a visitors' center that offers guided tours (Winery St, Tel.: (04) 639-1788, www.carmelwines.co.il).



More Wine

Two additional wineries should be added to the list of the wine connoisseur. Binyamina Winery (Tel.: (04) 638-8643, www. binvaminawines.com) was founded in 1925 as a perfume plant and later turned into a liqueur and brandy distillery called Eliaz. Finally, in 1996, it became the boutique winery it is today. The other winery not to miss is the Tishbi Winerv (Tel.: (04) 638-0434/5. www.tishbi.com), founded by Michael Chamiletzki who arrived in Zichron Ya'acov in 1882 as Baron Rothschild's chief vineyard developer. The winery is owned today by Jonathan Tishbi, Michael Chamiletzki's grandson, and his children, the fourth generation, are continuing the tradition and also work in the winery.

Dining Out

Cashtonio wine cellar

The wine celler in Zichron is located in a 140-year-old Turkish prison. Wide selection of wines and romantic atmosphere. 56 Hamesdim St, Tel.: (04) 629-1244

❷ Bistro de Carmel

Set in a 120-year-old outhouse of the Zichron winery. Fine dining with a wiff of the old 19th century winery.

7 Derech Hayain,
Tel.: (04) 629-0977

Travel Time:
Half a Day
Distance:
40 km
Best Months:
Nov-June









Overnight

Dan Caesaria

Enjoy a concert in the famous Roman amphitheatre overlooking the sea and return to the Dan, for a luxury break with coastal settings, in the historical city of Caesarea.

Ceasarea 30600, Tel.: (03) 520-2552, www.danhotels.com

Hotel Kibbutz Nahsholim

Nahsholim Seaside Resort is situated on the exquisite Dor Beach, cradled by lagoons, natural bays, and small islands.

Hof Carmel 30815, Tel.: (04) 639-9533, www.nahsholim.co.il

Carmel Forest Spa Resort

Hailed as the most beautiful spa in Israel, hidden in the acres of green forestry of the Carmel, this is the place to find tranquility, beauty, and relaxation.

Carmel Forest, PO Box 90 000, Haifa, Tel.: (04) 830-7888, www.isrotelexclusivecollection.com

Ahuzat Zamarin Hotel

Zamarin Mansion is located at the beginning of the bohemian 'Wine Route' pedestrian street in Zichron Ya'acov, boasting rustic guest rooms and candlelit spa treatments.

Tel.: (04) 639-7404, www.zamarin-spa.co.il



Haifa: Mountain and Sea

Extending from the blue bay of Haifa on the Mediterranean coast to the top of the Carmel Mountains, the city of Haifa is often compared to San Francisco. The steep streets that climb the mountain slopes making driving a challenge, but cable cars and a subway, as well as buses, make it easy to reach all the sites worth seeing, from the broad beaches on the southern edge of the bay to the world-famous Bahai Gardens and luxurious hotels nestled high up on the slopes.



Bahai Gardens

The centre of this world religion is located in a beautiful garden on the slopes of the Carmel. It comprises the shrines of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb, and 19 gorgeous terraces.

www.ganbahai.org.il

Germany Colony

Established in 1869 by the Templars, a Protestant sect from Germany, the German Colony now rests at the heart of Haifa. Today popular restaurants, cafés, and pubs can be found here.

Hecht Museum

This museum houses Reuben Hecht's personal art and archaeology collection plus an ancient ship that sank on its way to the Land of Israel 2,400 years ago.

From Refineries to Gardens

This industrial port city, whose labourers' political leanings earned Haifa the nickname 'the Red City'. is home to an unexpectedly fine and varied collection of museums Start by learning about some of the industries that helped the city grow with a visit to the Israel Edible Oil Industry Museum (2 Tovim Street, Tel.: (04) 865-4333), or the Dagon Grain Museum (Palmer Square, Tel.: (04) 866-4221), or learn about the forms of transportation that made Haifa into a maior hub at the National Maritime Museum (198 Allenby Boulevard, Tel.: (04) 853-6652), and the Railway Museum (1 Hativat Golani St. Tel.: (04) 856-4293).

Then head outside for a stroll through the German Colony, which the Templars built in the early twentieth century, and stop for lunch in one of the many cafés, restaurants, and pubs that now inhabit the old stone buildings.

Dining Out



• Hanamal 24

A Tuscan-inspired restaurant set in the shadow of Haifa's port. Antique and rustic furnishings.

24 Hanamal St, Tel.: (04) 862-8899

2 1872 Hashmura

A charming, rustic, French restaurant set in a restored German Colony mansion built in 1872.

15 Ben Gurion Blvd, Tel.: (04) 855-1872



Next make your way up the Carmel, making sure to stop and soak up the dramatic views of the bay, to the international centre of the Bahai religion. Adherents of the religion come from around the world to tend the shrines and gardens, as well as to offer free tours to visitors. Finally, continue up to the top of the Carmel to tour the campuses of the University of Haifa (www.haifa.ac.il) and the Technion-Institute of Israeli Technology (www.technion.ac.il).



Late Night Tips

Syncopa

A lounge bar located in downtown Haifa, has injected some life back into the area with groove music and elegant interiors.

5 Khayat St,

Tel.: (05) 091-8889

Haifa Auditorium

Haifa's largest concert hall, presents symphony, opera, the Israel Philharmonic, dance concerts, and many other cultural events.

138 Ha-Nassi Blvd,
Tel.: (04) 835-3555

Luna

Part crusader castle, part modern nightclub, Luna is an exciting nightclub where young sybarites can drink at five bars or dance in three separate halls.

5 El Pasha,

Tel.: (04) 862-6264

Fattouch

A medieval Arabic house with an old-fashioned dining room and a Bedouin room with rugs and divans. 38 Ben Gurion Blvd, Tel.: (04) 852-4930

Douzan

Decorated with clocks, musical instruments, and antiques. Fusion food prepared by the owner's mother.

35 Ben Gurion Blvd, Tel.: (04) 852-5444

Travel Time:
4 hours
Distance:
20 km
Best Months:
All Year









Overnight

Rothschild Mansion

A stone mansion built by Baron Rothschild in 1929 is now home to a rustic boutique hotel located in a pastoral setting.

41 Southern St, Haifa, Neve Shaanan.

Tel.: (05) 7231-0947,

www.rothschild-mansion.co.il

The Colony Hotel Haifa

A beautiful boutique hotel located in a Templar period building dating from 1905, which has been preserved for over 100 years in the heart of the German Colony.

28 Ben Gurion Blvd, German Colony, Haifa,

Tel.: (04) 851-3344, www.colony-hotel.co.il

Templars Boutique Hotel

Set in a building dating from 1872, the hotel's modern interior contrasts with its ancient exterior where meals are served at the famed Fattoush restaurant, adjacent to the hotel.

36 Ben Gurion Blvd, German Colony, Haifa,

Tel.: (027) 7500-3110, www.templers-haifa.com

Villa Carmel Boutique Hotel

A boutique hotel and spa originally built as Haifa's most luxurious hotel in the 1940s, on a pastoral road surrounded by a private forest. It was the hotel of choice for Haifa's aristocracy and Israel's first prime minister, David Ben Gurion.

1 Heinrich Heine St, Haifa,

Tel.: (04) 837-5777/8, www.villacarmel.co.il



Acre: The Crusaders' Last Stand

Set on a peninsula at the northern tip of Haifa bay, the town of St Jean d'Acre served as the Crusader capital for a century. It was the beginning of the road to the riches of the East and the new urban centres of the West. Much of the old town is still intact, tucked behind the sea walls. Walk down its alleys, markets, and ancient caravanserais and you almost can hear the bustle and voices of this major trade emporium from the Middle Ages.



• The al-Jazzar Mosque

Constructed in 1781, the mosque is built over the remains of a Crusader cathedral. The tombs of al-Jazzar and his successor Suleiman Pasha are here.

Hummus in the Market

Acre's outdoor market is famous for the hummus served by small eateries. Many consider Sa'id (*Tel.: (04) 991-3945*) the best, but arrive early to try a few local haunts and decide for yourself.

The Knights Hall

This elegant hall with high vaulted ceilings and ornamented columns served as the ceremonial hall of the Hospitaller Knights. The palaces of Acre's Ottoman rulers were built on top of it in the seventeenth and eighteenth century.

Knights & Merchants Old City of Acre

Start your tour at the Enchanted Garden (www.acre.org.il), once the courtvard of the Ottoman governor of Acre. Visit the Okashi Museum (Tel.: (04) 995-6710/1). and continue to the Turkish citadel that was built over the Crusaderera castle of the Hospitallers — the Knights of St John. In the early twentieth century, the citadel served as a prison and the cells and gallows can still be seen. Underneath the citadel is the Crusader castle's courtvard and the underground Crusader city, including the Hospitaller Knights dining hall. An underground escape tunnel leads through the ancient sewers to the covered market street. Exit the hazaar and enter the Hamam al-Basha bathhouse. Make your way through the alleys of the Old City to Genoa Square in what was once the centre of the Genoese Ouarter, The Bahá'u'lláh. founder of the Bahai faith, was imprisoned nearby in Aboud

Active Suggestions

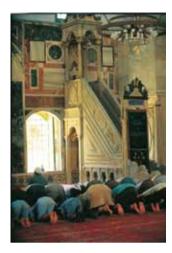


The Ramparts Walk

A significant portion of the walls of Acre which were built between 1750 and 1840, still are intact. To get a real feel for the ancient city, take a ramble along the walls.

Bahai Gardens

The Bahai Gardens in Acre, are equally as impressive as their Haifa counterpart. They surround the mansion in which Bahá'u'lláh spent his final years and his tomb. (www.ganbahai.org.illen)



House. Walk along the western seawall to the lighthouse. From there, follow the promenade to the Pisan Harbour and continue on to the el-Umdan caravansary. Exit to the fishing harbour and walk back through the market to the parking lot where you entered the Old City. Visit the al-Jazzar Mosque, where the Turkish governor of Acre who defeated Napoleon, is buried. Finish your visit with a drive to the Bahai Gardens at the outskirts of Acre



Travel Tips

Templar Tunnel

During the second half of the 12th century the knights of the Templar Order began building an escape tunnel from their fortress to the city port, a distance of 350 metres. The tunnel was discovered in 1994 and was opened to the public in September 1999, with access along a wooden walkway.

Khan el-Umdan

A large inn near the port. Merchants unloaded their goods on the first floor and stayed in the rooms of the second floor. The khan was built in the late 18th century by Ahmed al-Jazzar. A large Turkish clock tower stands at the entrance to the khan. adorned with the emblem of the Turkish sultan.

Dining Out

Uri Buri

Exceptional fresh fish and seafood restaurant in an old Turkish house facing the sea. Reservations necessary. 93 Haganah St., Acre Tel.: (04) 955-2212

Abu Christo

Enjoy the shaded sea terrace and the view across Haifa bay whilst tucking into a Greekstyle meal.

Nr. Lighthouse, Acre, Tel.: (04) 991-0065

Travel Time: 4 hours Distance: 10 km Best Months: All Year







Overnight

Akkotel

A charming 16-room boutique hotel set in a lovingly restored building against the walls of Acre's Old City, boasts a rooftop terrace and restaurant with spectacular views.

1153 Salah-Al-Din St, Acre Old City,

Tel.: (04) 987-7100, www.akkotel.com

Pinhas and Gaston Guest House

South of Nahariya, with a view to the sea, lays this intimate boutique hotel on Moshav Shavey Zion. Offers spacious, breathtaking luxury suites, spa, and wine and cigar cellar. Moshav Shavey Zion.

Tel.: (04) 952-6000, www.gaston.co.il

Knight Youth Hostel & Guest House

Brand new youth hostel in the old port city of Acre resting on an ancient archeological site, with artifacts from its excavation displayed in the lobby and dining rooms. It was also the first building built in the first 500 years of the Old City.

1 Weitzman, Acre Old City, Tel.: (02) 594 5711, Email: akko@iyha.org.il



Galilee Coast: The White Cliffs

From Acre to the northern border of Israel, rests a beautiful coastal valley of fertile fields and rocky beaches, culminating in the white chalk cliffs of Rosh Hanikra. Rock hyraxes play on the steep slopes while the world's steepest cable car descends to the sea grottoes hollowed out by ferocious waves eroding the soft rock for eons. A manmade bridge and tunnel runs along the bottom of the cliff. Once upon a time, travellers on the Orient Express, journeyed from Istanbul, Turkey, all the way down to Alexandria, Egypt, by passing through these tunnels, which is today a tightly sealed international border.



Rainbow Cave

This dramatic collapsed cave on the top of the Sulam Range is the ultimate viewpoint of the Western Galilee. Open all year round, it is the place for rock climbing. The path to the cave is an easy 10-minute walk. The more agile also can follow the path that leads along the cliff and down to the riverbed or ascend to the cave. Route 9993, near Kibbutz Adamit

Montfort Castle

The Teutonic knights' stronghold sits in the middle of the forest overlooking the Galilee riverbeds. The ruins of this once-grand Crusader castle are a 30-minute walk from either the Goren park, on the northern bank of Nahal Keziv, or from Mi'ilya and Hilla.

Purple Dye Rosh Hanikra

Akhziy was a small Phoenician harbour on a rocky outcrop overlooking the sea. Its claim to fame was the small white sea snail from which the purple dve of rovalty was manufactured. During the Crusader period, it was a fortified position. Much later, it was a small Arab fishing village, later abandoned in 1948. After the War of Independence. Eli Avivi settled in the village's empty houses and declared Akhziv an independent country. Club Med later took up residence on the beautiful beach in the southern part. Finally, a national park was created, which today is a beautiful landscaped park with a small bay and rocky pools to swim in. Further north, a promenade runs along the beach, which reaches the blocked railway tunnel through the white cliffs of Rosh Hanikra. Cable cars are availiable down to the grottoes, From Rosh Hanikra. make your way to Rainbow Cave. taking the serpentine road that leads

Dining Out



Adelina Restaurant

Chef Rushdi Dakwar makes the most of local and seasonal ingredients at this gourmet restaurant. Kibbutz Kabri, Tel.: (04) 952-3707

Hazuk Halavan

Enjoy the best of Moroccan and European cuisine at this lovely restaurant with a romantic atmosphere.

Mitzpe Rosh Hanikra,
Tel: 057-944-1424



to the top of the Sulam Range, for an afternoon view of the coastal plain or to Montfort Castle, which the Teutonic knights fortified and renamed Starkenberg before they left the Holy Land. The castle overlooks the Nahal Keziv riverbed, which runs through Mediterranean woodland. If you are lucky and visit during the right season, you will see the grand Madonna lilies or even a stray roe deer. To the north of the riverbed, the castle can be viewed from the Elon Forest-Montfort Castle lookout point.



Active Suggestions

Akhziv National Park

This wonderful park among the old houses of the village of Akhziv also boasts rock pools along the beach for swimming. An official national park and campground, Akhziv has lifeguards, a snack bar, bathrooms, showers, and other facilities as well as an entrance fee.

Route 4, Tel.: (04) 982-3263 www.parks.org.il

Rosh Hanikra

A host of tourism attractions has sprouted up around the sea grottoes in the white cliffs on Israel's northern border, from the scenic rides on the cable car and the small train to several restaurants and the sound-and-light show.

Route 4, Tel.: 073-2710100, www.roshhanikra.com

Etsusha

Country-style delicacies, served by a fireplace in winter and a green courtyard in summer. 43 Hagfen St, Moshav Liman, Tel.: (04) 982-1250

◆ Morganfeld

This steakhouse specialises in roasting meat over coals. Try the entrecote steak, beef filet, or asado.

Moshav Liman
Tel.: (04) 952-4333

Travel Time:
4 hours
Distance:
60 km
Best Months:
Nov-May







Overnight

Haruach HaGalil

Luxury villas in unique resort established a decade ago, located by the Kziv River, offers an action-packed break for all the family to enjoy, with a waterpark, go-carting, and bike tours. There's also horse riding opportunities in the mountain ranges.

Goren,

Tel.: (04) 980 6951/9, www.adis.co.il

B'Vadi Etzel Ayali

Go on an adventure through the dirt tracks of Klil to reach one of its two romantic mountain cabins, built on stilts, where guests will feel like the only two people on earth.

Moshay Klil. Western Galilee.

Tel.: (05) 0379-4661, www.eyali.co.il

Berachta

Two deluxe suites in complete seclusion in a natural forest, next to a stream, surrounded by enchanting plants and flowers.

Shomra, Western Galilee, Tel.: (05) 4452-5286



Jezreel Valley: Armageddon

War chariots have raced through this valley time and again, ever since Pharaoh Thutmose III beat a coalition of the kings of Canaan that tried to bar his way across the valley in 1493 BCE. The Jezreel Valley has since seen the chariots of Israel, Assyria, and Babylonia, the armour of the Crusaders, the horses of the Mongols, the troops of Napoleon, and even the tanks of World War I. The horsemen of the apocalypse will easily fit in during the final battle of Gog and Magog. Apart from that, this is a large valley of fertile fields stretching in every direction and surrounded by mountains.



Megiddo Water System

The oldest part of this water system probably dates to the days of King Solomon, when a path between parallel walls led to the spring outside the city. Later, apparently during King Ahab's time, a more complex system was constructed, including a 25-metre shaft and 70-metre tunnel, in order to conceal the spring and allow people to draw water without leaving the city walls.

John Deere Land

Yossi Simchoni's developed his lifelong fascination with tractors into a museum with a collection of old John Deere tractors and equipment, all lovingly restored to working order, among other attractions.

Tel.: (04) 677-2560

Pharaoh & Prophet Megiddo, Tabor

Start your Jezreel Valley tour with a visit to Megiddo National Park (Tel.: (04) 659-0316, www.parks. org.il). Sure, this is an ancient site with lots of difficult-to-understand ruins, but considering that they are the remains of 22 cities built one on top of the other, a little respect is called for while wandering through the ruins. The highlight for non-archaeologists is the ancient water system; for archaeology buffs, it is probably the gates, the ancient stables, and the temples. Next, make your way through the valley to Mount Tabor. For some, this thumb-like mountain sticking out of the valley floor is the Mount of the Transfiguration of Jesus: for others, it is the site where the prophetess Deborah sat under the palm tree and judged over Israel. In any case, the view from the top is worth the climb. In addition to the magnificent view, the mountaintop boasts two monasteries: Catholic and Greek

Culinary Delights



Meshek Zak

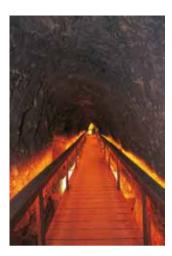
Pick your fill of berries

– from white mulberries
to raspberries to blackberries – to take home
from the fields.

Moshav Sede Ya'acov, Tel.: (04) 983-2539

Pundak Hajachnun

Livia and Yoel Yellin serve Yemenite cuisine in a renovated Templar house. Bethlehem Hagelilit, Tel.: (04) 983-2095, www.gnm21.com/ jachnun



Orthodox. Next, head to Beit She'arim National Park (Tel.: (04) 983-1643, www.parks.org.il) for a little underground exploration in the 2000-year-old Jewish catacombs. Not all the caves are open to visitors, but those that are, are crammed full of sarcophagi with inscriptions and carvings. Not far away, overlooking the valley, is the statue of Alexander Zeid, the poetic guardsman who once stood guard over the lands of the Jewish Agency in the Jezreel Valley.



Travel Tips

Spicy Way Farm

The organic herbs and spices that the Zithershpieler family sells around the globe come from the fields which the family has cultivated for over 50 years. Tour the fields and attend a cooking class.

Bethlehem Hagelilit, Tel.: (04) 953-3405, www.spice-way.com

Carmel Yevulim

For a taste of the local produce, visit this farmer's market to pick up fresh asparagus, sprouts, grapes, olives, snow peas, and more. Moshav Hayogev, Tel.: (04) 989-1858

161.: (04) 989-1858 S Yiftah'el Winerv

Tzvika and Hadas Ofir's farm includes a winery, vineyards, beehives, and a log cabin. *Alon Hagalil*, *Tel.:* (04) 986-1466

Dining Out

Hakdera Shel Noga

Hakdera Shel Noga is a surprising gourmet restaurant set in a wooden, rustic cabin in the middle of the valley. Moshav Beit She'arim, Tel.: (04) 983-0730

② Limousine

A fine restaurant where the meat comes from a cattle ranch in Kfar Horesh. There is also a butcher shop here. Ramat Yishai, Tel.: (04) 953-3173 Travel Time:
4 hours
Distance:
60 km
Best Months:
Nov-May



Beit Shturman

This old-fashioned nature museum amuses, educates, and horrifies with its various specimens, fossils, and stuffed animals, including a two-headed creature.

Kibbutz Ein Harod,
Tel.: (04) 648-6328

Gan Hashlosha

Bring a bathing suit so that you can take a swim in the springs, pools, and streams of the Harod River.

Route 669 near Beit She'an, Tel.: (04) 648-8097

Merhavia

Take a stroll around Kibbutz Merhavia, checking out the original buildings of one of the first agricultural communes in Israel. Kibbutz Merhavia, Tel.: (04) 659-8882

Mongol Spears The Harod Valley

This little valley, an offshoot of the better-known Jezreel Valley, has a momentous history. The Harod Valley is where Gideon mustered his troops. King Saul fell on his sword, and the battle that stopped the Mongol hordes was fought. This valley also has more than a few hidden gems that will appeal to the discerning traveller. Start at the Museum of Art at Ein Harod (Tel.: (04) 648-5701. www.museumeinharod.org.il). Next, make your way to the ancient synagogue at Kibbutz Hefzi-bah (Tel.: (04) 653-2004). with its modernist-looking, fifthcentury mosaic floor depicting biblical scenes, a zodiac replete with human figures, and Helios or Apollo riding a chariot across the skies. Make sure to visit the kibbutz's Japanese garden while you are there. Next, drive to Beit She'an National Park (Tel.: (04) 658-7189) to tour the ruins of Scythopolis, the famous capital

Active Suggestions



• Tel Yizrael

There might not be much left of King Ahab's second capital, from which he ruled with Queen Jezebel, but the viewpoint over the Harod Valley is great.

Ein Yizrael

A short hiking trail marked in blue leads down from Tel Yizrael to Ein Yizrael, a beautiful spot for a swim. Route 675 near Navot Junction



Move on to slightly more modern times by stopping at Belvoir (Kokhav Hayarden) National Park (Tel.: (04) 658-1766) to check out the view from this commanding Crusader fortress overlooking the Jordan Valley and the mountains of Moab

Travel Tips

• Belvoir

@ Gesher

End the tour with a visit to the old British police station at Kibbutz Gesher (*Tel.:* (04) 675-2685/3336), not only because of the fascinating history of the railway bridge over the River Jordan, but also for Rotenberg (*Tel.:* (04) 675-2237), the excellent restaurant located next to this historic site in one of the outhouses of the old British police fort.



of the Greek Decapolis. Move on to slightly more modern times by stopping at Belvoir (Kokhav Hayarden) National Park (Tel.: (04) 658-1766) to check out the view from the Crusader fortress overlooking the Jordan Valley and the mountains of Moab. End the tour with a visit to the old British police station at Gesher (Tel.: (04) 675-2685/3336), not only because of its fascinating history, but also for the excellent Rotenberg restaurant (Tel.: (04) 675-2237).

Dining Out

Bikels Café

The coffee house at the art museum is set in a beautiful garden and serves amazing cakes. Museum of Art Ein Harod, Tel.: (04) 648-5701

Kimmel Bagilboa

At the foot of Mount Gilboa, this elegant restaurant offers outstanding views and locally sourced produce. Tel.: (04) 689-5566 or 057-944-4104

Travel Time:
4 hours
Distance:
60 km
Best Months:
Nov-May







Overnight

Ein Harod Country Guest House

Surrounded by the Harod Valley, Ein Harod offers a kibbutz experience to remember, with luxury rustic cabins, stunning views, a variety of alternative treatments, two museums, and Bickels café.

Kibbutz Ein Harod (Ihud), Tel.: (04) 648-6083 www.ein-harod.co.il

Magic Touch Spa

These former horse stables and cow barns in the Medan family rear courtyard have been converted into a homely and welcoming health spa and guesthouse.

Bethlehem Hagelilit, Tel.: (04) 953-1159, www.kesemhamaga.co.il

Neve Hagar

Set in an original Templar stone building in the village where guests can enjoy its rich historical heritage and explore the myths tying the village to Nazareth and Bethlehem.

Bethlehem Hagelilit,

Tel.: (04) 953-3353, www.nevehagar.co.il



Sea of Galilee: Gospel Winds

The Sea of Galilee is actually a small lake. Fed by the Jordan River and winter storms, it is oval in shape, 13 miles long, eight miles wide, and has a maximum depth of around 141 feet. Situated 702 feet below sea level, it is the world's lowest freshwater lake and the world's second-lowest lake, after the Dead Sea. Its shores have witnessed some of the most momentous events in human history. Some of the earliest prehistoric human settlements have been found here and most of the events of the Christian Gospels occurred in the villages and towns on the northern shores.



• St Peter's Church, Tiberias

This church dedicated to Saint Peter is just off the lakefront promenade and was built in the eleventh century and refurbished by Franciscans in the eighteenth century. Don't miss the mosaic depicting Peter in a boat on the Sea of Galilee.

Winter Lupines

The lupines bloom by the thousands around Mount Tabor in winter. For some good photo ops, stop on the main road from Afula to Kfar Tavor, just before the turnoff to the Tavor. There are lupines galore on the right side of the road. For a better view, drive to Kfar Kisch and hike down to the basalt canyon of Nahal Tavor. The hills are carpeted with this beautiful flower.

The Last Stand Hattin & Tiberias

The events that brought about the end of the Crusader kingdom are still under debate in countless scholarly texts. But all agree that everything hinged on the dramatic battle between the Crusader armies and the armies of Saladin on 4 July 1187. It was a bloody battle and a total rout for the knights gathered from all over the kingdom. The battle was fought on one hill, the Horns of Hattin, an extinct volcano with two small horn-like peaks. A short hiking path leads from the end of the road to the top, as does a jeep track that runs into the crater of the volcano. The top offers a magnificent view of the mountains of Galilee and the lake The next stop is at the bottom of the volcano's northern slope: the grave of Jethro, Nebi Shueib, one of the holiest Druze shrines and a pilgrimage site for thousands. Across the small Vale of Hittin is the Arbel National Park and Nature

Travel Tips

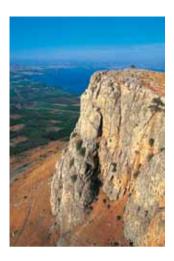


Archaeological Park

Check out the remains of Roman and Byzantine Tiberias, including a synagogue, a mosaic floor, sarcophagi, and basalt doors that used to belong to burial caves.

Onna Gracia Street

The street running from the shore up to the citadel of Tiberias is lined with buildings of historic and archaeological interest, from the Sraya to the Scots Hotel



Reserve (Near Moshav Arbel. Tel.: (04) 673-2904). The mountain is actually a massive cliff that falls straight down to the shores of the lake. Hewn into the cliff is a four-storey fortress, home of rebels, robbers, and brigands from the days of Rome until the eighteenth century. A hiking path leads down the cliff to the fortress and loops around back to the top of the cliff. Now drive to the city of Tiberias. whose notable sites include the graves of many Jewish sages.



Graves of Saints

Maimonides (Rambam)

According to Jewish tradition, this great sage, who died in Egypt in 1206, was buried in Tiberias. His body was transported to Tiberias by camel.

Grave of Rabbi Akiva

Rabbi Akiya is buried in a cave above the city. The dramatic site overlooking the city draws many supplicants, day and night. The tomb of Rabbi Akiva's wife. Rachel, is believed to be near the old cemetery of the city.

Meir the Miracle Maker

Rabbi Meir is buried near the southern entrance to the city and two synagogues and a Torah academy have been built around his tomb. The site draws thousands of people, especially on the memorial day of Rabbi Meir.

Dining Out

Decks

Set on a long deck jutting out over the Sea of Galilee. Decks serves a plethora of barbecued meats, poultry, and fish. Gdud Barak St. Tiberias Tel.: (04) 672-1538

Abu Salah

Renowned hummus and meat restaurant that will give you a true feel for Middle Eastern food, with an exquisite vista. Amiad Junction.

Tel.: (04) 680-1356

Travel Time: 4 hours Distance: 60 km Best Months: Nov-May



O Church of the Apostles

This small church dedicated to the seven apostles was built in 1931 at the site where the village of Capernaum relocated to after an earthquake in the year 746. Even though this is not the Capernaum of Jesus, this beautiful tranquil spot is worth a visit. Tel.: (04) 672-2282

Domus Galilaeae

This centre was built in response to Pope Paul VI's desire to create a place where seminarians and presbyters could study and reflect upon the scriptures in the surroundings in which they were created. In addition to modern conference facilities, there is a church, chapel, and library. Tel.: (04) 680-9100, www.domusgalilaeae.org

Evangelical Triangle Northern Shores

One of the major pilgrimage sites in the Christian world, this is where many of the events recounted in the Gospels took place. Start the tour with an overview from the Church of the Beatitudes (Tel : (04) 672-6712) one of the traditional sites of the Sermon on the Mount Drive or walk down to the little shore vale of Tabgha, ancient Heptapegon (the Valley of the Seven Springs). The Church of the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes (Tel -(04) 6700-180), with a beautiful Byzantine mosaic floor, marks the major miracle attributed to this site. Around the corner, on the lake, is the Church of the Primacy of Peter (Tel.: (04) 672-0516). which marks the site of Jesus' last appearance on the lake, A fourkilometer walkway runs parallel to the shore road to Capernaum (Tel.: (04) 672-1059), the town where Jesus lived during his ministry on the lake. Most of the ancient

Culinary Delights



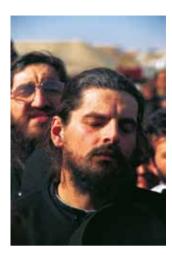
① Levona Grove

Call in advance to arrange a tour of this grove of over 100 species of trees from around the world.

Moshav Almagor,
Tel: 052-538-5757

Marinado Restaurant

This store and restaurant specializes in lamb and veal raised nearby. It also sells cheeses and wines. *Kibbutz Ein Gev,* Tel: (04) 665-8555



town has not been excavated, but a massive synagogue, which was discovered in 1904, has been uncovered along with rows of houses around it. Next, drive up the hill via Almagor to Korazim National Park (Tel.: (04) 693-4982). The ancient site is one of the best places to understand what a town looked like during the time of Jesus. Then drive to Vered Hagalil (Tel.: (04) 693-5785, www.veredhagalil.com) to end the day with American pancakes.



Travel Tips

© Pilgrim's House

Originally established by the German Association of the Holy Land in 1889 as an educational centre, the property was confiscated after the War of Independence. In the 1990s, it was returned to the association, which renovated and expanded it to create a modern guesthouse for pilgrims.

Tel.: (04) 670-0100

Capernaum

Now a national park jointly operated by the Franciscan Church and the Israel Nature and Parks Authority, the churches, synagogue, and houses of the first-century fishing village of Capernaum will appeal to archaeology and history buffs as well as to pilgrims and nature lovers. *Tel.: (04) 672-1059*

Active Suggestions

• Sea of Galilee Trail

The trail around the shores of the Sea of Galilee is not complete yet. But many sections are ready and make for a great lake stroll. Tiberias Tourist Office

Beatitudes Walk

Short downhill walk.
Start at Church of the
Beatitudes and walk
down hill to Tabga.
Great views of the Sea
of Galilee along this 40
minute walk.

Travel Time:
4 hours
Distance:
60 km
Best Months:
All Year



• The Crocodile Farm

In addition to hot springs, a spa hotel, and an archaeology park, Hamat Gader is home to the largest crocodile farm in the Middle East. There are some 200 crocodiles of different species, including species from Africa and South America

Tmarim Plus

More than just a shop,
Tmarim Plus is dedicated to dates — different types of dates grown in Israel are sold here along with date honey, date spread, date jam, and anything else imaginable made from the fruit of the trees growing around the Sea of Galilee. Herbs, spices, teas, wine, and other local products are also available. Kvutza Kinneret, Tel.: (04) 675-9678

Baths of Aphrodite Hot Springs

Situated in the Syrian-African rift, the longest cleft in the face of the Earth (running from Turkey to Africa), the Sea of Galilee is also the site of many hot springs that rise up from the depths of the Earth. The two most famous are Hamat Gader (Tel.: (04) 665-9964. www.hamat-gader.com) on the eastern shores and Hamat Tiberias (Tel.: (04) 672-5287) on the western side. Both have been important health and beauty spots since Roman times. The Jewish sages used to frequent them, excusing themselves for passing the many naked Greek statues along the baths by remarking that they are only there for decoration. Start the tour at the Hamat Tiberias synagogue, probably the most beautiful ancient synagogue in Israel. Very liberal with its art. it shows a mosaic floor decorated with a zodiac with naked figures and a centrepiece of Helios riding his chariot of the sun across

Active Suggestions



Yigal Allon Centre

This museum presents the Galilee's unique landscape and history with an audiovisual presentation.

Kibbutz Ginosar, Tel.: (04) 672-7700

The Jesus Boat

The 2,000-year-old boat discovered in the Sea of Galilee and restored in an unusual operation is on display to the public. *Kibbutz Ginosar, Tel.:* (04) 672-7700



the skies. From there drive to the Hamat Gader hot springs located in a dramatic gorge of the Yarmukh River. The sulfuric, 52-degrees-Celsius hot springs have been used as a therapeutic centre from Ancient Rome, when a complex of bathhouses was built on the site, including one used for curing skin ailments. Nowadays you can visit the excavated site or bathe in the hot waters that run through a series of pools and waterfalls.



Travel Tips

• Yardenit

Pilgrims travel from every corner of the world to be baptized in the Jordan River. The most popular place to do so is Yardenit, which has all the facilities needed for a baptismal ceremony.

Kibbutz Kinneret,
Tel.: (04) 675-9111.

Bet Gabriel

www.yardenit.com

This cultural and social centre on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, which was built by the Gabriel Sherover Foundation, hosts art exhibits, concerts, and performances. The facilities include a large outdoor amphitheatre as well as a restaurant, both of which offer a gorgeous view of the Sea of Galilee.

Tel.: (04) 675-1175, www.betgabriel.co.il

Dining Out

Roberg Restaurant

Operated by a family of chefs and bakers, Roberg Restaurant offers excellent homestyle cuisine.

Moshav Livnim,
Tel.: (04) 671-5656

Ktse Hanahal

Chef Joseph (Zuzu) Hana serves authentic Lebanese, Jordanian, and Galilean cuisine in a sensational setting. Kibbutz Ginnosar, Tel.: (04) 671-7776 Travel Time:
4 hours
Distance:
60 km
Best Months:
All Year



Elbabour Galilee Mill

Every spice, grain, herb, and tea imaginable is sure to be found in this 100-year-old mill, run by two brothers. El-Bishara St,

Tel.: (04) 645-5596, www.elbabour.com

Cactus

This ancient bathhouse and crafts gift shop has a heartwarming tale of the ruin's discovery by the shop's owners. Mary's Well Sq, Tel.: (04) 567-8539

Shababik

Shababik was the first shop to re-open in the Old City's cobbled streets. The store and art gallery is located inside a beautifully renovated building. Street 6198, Old City, Tel.: (04) 608-0747

Mary's Well Nazareth

Start your visit to Nazareth at Mary's Well. Check out the Church of Saint Gabriel and then make your way along the alleys of the Old City to the market. The streets next to the grand Basilica of the Annunciation abound with souvenirs for the Christian pilgrim, but once you wander into the alleys further away from the church, you will find yourself in a genuine Middle Eastern market. replete with practitioners of longlost trades such as spice choppers. meat mixers, tinkers, and broom makers. You will also find cobblers. bakers, hubbly bubbly ioints. little market eateries, as well as a vegetable market and alley of wedding-gown makers. Next make your way to the Basilica of the Annunciation, which is decorated with hundreds of modern mosaics of the Madonna and child, each one made by a different Catholic community from around the world. On the church's bottom floor

Dining Out



Alreda

Restaurant and café set in a stunning Ottoman era mansion belonging to the family of Galilean ruler Dahir al-Amr. 23 El-Bishara Street, Tel.: (04) 608-4404

Tishreen

Approximately 150 years old, this home has been transformed into an elegant restaurant with Mediterranean ambience. 56 Ha'Mayaan Street, Tel.: (04) 608-4666



are the remains of Crusader and Byzantine churches; the huge top floor serves as the Catholic parish church of Nazareth. Remains of the ancient village of Nazareth can be seen in the basement of the church, in the adjacent Church of Saint Joseph, and in the basements of other churches around the city. Next drive to the promenade that runs along the crest of the hill above Nazareth. Enjoy the panoramic views of the city and the Galilee mountains.



Late Night Tips

Misk Stage Bar

This trendy cocktail bar and restaurant opposite the Old Muslim Cemetery attracts a young and musical crowd. El-Bishara St (no number, look for a sign), Tel.: (07) 7203-1811, www.miskhar.com

Andarin

A lively bar and restaurant that prides itself on its Irish whiskey, beer, and spirits selection. Sporting events shown in the courtyard. Frank Sinatra Building, St 6026,

Tel.: (04) 601-3137

Sudfeh

Exquisite modern arts and dining space set in a stone mansion with courtyard for drinks and dining alfresco. Street 6089/35, Mary's Well Sq. Tel.: (04) 656-6611

El Mejana

Diners can experience authentic, Arabic dishes at this chef's restaurant. Mary's Well Square, Tel.: (04) 602-1067, www.el-mejana.rest-e. co.il

Diana

Set high on a hill, Diana is renowned for its variety of appetizers. Street 5053/1, El Mutran neighborhood, Tel.: (04) 657-2919, www.diana-rest.com

Travel Time:
4 hours
Distance:
60 km
Best Months:
All Year



Kinneret Cemetery

The kibbutz movement was born on the shores of the Sea of Galilee in the early twentieth century. Its founders were idealistic. voung socialists who had immigrated to the Land of Israel from Eastern Europe in order to build a new society. Many of them went on to become the cultural, political, and social leaders of the State of Israel. Some of the most famous of these pioneers are buried in this cemetery at Moshava Kinneret, on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Wander among the graves to see the final resting place of the poetess Rachel, songwriter Naomi Shemer, military commander Shaul Avigur, and philosopher Berl Katznelson.

Moshava Kinneret, Tel.: (04) 675-9123

Kibbutz Land Kinnrot Valley

Start your tour at the founders' courtvard of Kibbutz Deganva Alef (Tel.: 052-374-9102). Here stand most of the buildings that made up the first kibbutz, still a fledgling idea, in 1905, While at the kibbutz, visit Beit Gordon (Tel.: (04) 675-0040), a 1930s collection of flora and fauna from the area. The quaint, old Bauhaus building and the jarred collections are a throwback to a different era. A short drive leads you to Kibbutz Deganya Bet. Make your way to the old cowshed, today the Galita Chocolate Farm (Tel.: (04) 675-5608, www.galita. co.il) for a tasting. Then head to Kibbutz Sha'ar Hagolan to visit the Museum of Yarmukian Culture (Tel.: (04) 667-7386, www.myc. ora.il), which houses the finds from the nearby excavations where the prehistoric Yarmukian culture was discovered. Difficult to find, it is worth the effort, From here, reach the nearby Kibbutz







Ashdot-Ya'akov and drive down to the Naharayim railway bridge and the entrance to the 'island'. This is where the Yarmukh River flows into the Jordan River via a massive winter waterfall, which is surrounded by the outhouses of the derelict Naharayim power station. Now drive to Kibbutz Ein Gev, on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, to visit the House of Anchors Fishing Museum (Tel.: (04) 665-8008), which displays the amazing collection of Mendel Nun.



Dining Out

O Café Rishonim

Located in the building that was originally the kibbutz cowshed, the pioneer's café specialises in vegetarian and dairy cuisine.

Kibbutz Deganyah Aleph, Tel: (04) 660-8273

Tzel Tamar Restaurant

A small ice cream and pizza parlour has grown into a restaurant with a varied menu that attracts families with young children. Kibbutz Ashdot Ya'acov Ihud, Tel: (04) 675-6688

O Ugata Café

Best known for its cakes and desserts, this vegetarian and dairy café also serves appetising entrees, from pasta and salads to quiches. Kibbutz Kinneret, Tel.: (04) 675-9687



Travel Time:
4 hours
Distance:
60 km
Best Months:
Nov-May









Overnight

Vered HaGalil

This guest farm is located on a horse ranch in the hills of the Galilee. Guests can stay in cabins and cottages, enjoy trail-riding, pick fruit from the orchards, and eat at the rustic restaurant.

Vered HaGalil Guest Farm, South of the Golan.

Tel.: (04) 693-57850 www.veredhagalil.com

Pauzi Azar Inn

Set in a 200-year-old Arab mansionturned-guesthouse, with original Turkish marble flooring, a large living area with panoramic views of the Old City, and a courtyard featuring Ottoman period arches. Within a minute's walk from the Old City market.

P.O. Box 2606, Nazareth, 16125, Tel.: (04) 602-0469 www.fauziazarinn.com

The Scots Hotel, Tiberias

Steeped in history and charm, this luxurious hotel is set in 19th-century stone buildings, which were hidden away by overgrown gardens and high walls for over a century.

1 Gdud Barak St, Tiberias, Tel.: (04) 671-0710, www.scotshotels.co.il

Marei Deshe Guest House

On the bank of the Sea of Galilee, Karei Deshe is built around a beautiful inner courtyard surrounded by palm trees, green lawns, and the magical view of the lake.

D.N. Hevel Korazim, 12365 Tel.: (04) 672-0601, www.iyha.org.il



The Upper Lake: The Hula Valley

Originally there was a beautiful swamp and lake here. But in the 1950s, when swamps were still considered bad places and the principles of conservation were different, the lake and the swamp were drained in the name of progress. Today the valley around it remains, together with a small nature reserve of swampland and an area that was re-flooded to recreate a small section of the original lake that attracts millions of birds annually during their seasonal migrations to and from Europe and Africa.



Dining Out

Pausa

This boutique hotel and restaurant is surrounded by gardens, an olive grove, and a vineyard whose bounty is served on its tables.

Moshav She'ar Yashuv, Tel.: 054-690-4434, www.pausa-inn.co.il

Muscat Restaurant

Chef Haim Tibi serves up creative riffs on local Galilean cuisine using organic produce grown in the adjacent fields.

Mizpe Hayamim, Rosh Pina, Tel.: (04) 699-4555, www.mizpe-hayamim.com

Seuda Began Eden

Located in an old stone building, this gourmet restaurant specialises in home-style cooking. Mount Canaan, Tel.: (04) 697-2434

Culinary Delights



Dag Al HaDan

A charming fish restaurant set amid the Dan River's tributaries. Off Kiryat Shemona-Banias Rd, Tel Dan, Tel.: (04) 695-0225, www.dagaldan.co.il

The Cornerstone Rosh Pina

The little village of Rosh Pina was founded in 1882 by enthusiastic Jewish pioneers from Romania. After 12 months, they were bankrupt: many of the pioneers had died of malaria and others had packed up and left. Those who remained turned to Baron Edmond James de Rothschild, who stepped in and saved them, just as he had done in several other struggling villages. The remains of that quaint, little village. with its nineteenth-century-style houses, synagogue, and the baron's administrative centre. have become the nucleus of a tourism powerhouse with bedand-breakfast places galore, rustic restaurants, and craft shops. After taking a stroll along the main street, drive to the Hula Nature Reserve (Tel.: (04) 693-7069) and the Hula Agamon (Tel.: (04) 681-7137, www.agamon-hula. co.il). They both are prime sites for bird watching (millions during

Pub Gosh

This picturesque restaurant is set in a rustic wooden building on Mount Hermon. Kibbutz Hagoshrim, Upper Galilee, Tel.: (04) 695-6753



the autumn and spring migrations) as well as for observing water buffalos, otters, and other relics of the original swamp. Drive down to the Daughters of Jacob bridge across the Jordan River and then take the eastern road along the valley, driving along the Jordan River through some great nature and farmland scenery to the upper part of the Hula Valley. Make sure to stop off on the way at some of the little streams and ponds that dot the landscape.



Dining Out

• Nechalim

A gourmet fusion restaurant on the shores of the Hatzbani River. Gan Hazafon, Alon gas station.

Tel.: (04) 690-4875, www.eng.nechalim.com

Bat Yaar Ranch

This ranch in the heart of the Biriya Forest boasts a country-style restaurant in a log cabin.

Mitzpe Amukah, Tel.: (04) 692-17880, www.batyaar.co.il

Chocolata

As its name implies, this restaurant in a beautifully restored historic building specialises in chocolate. Try the pralines and the chocolate cocktails. Rosh Pina,

Tel.: (04) 686-0219

Travel Tips

Vision Gallery

Photographer Neil Folberg's work is on display at the gallery and guesthouse he and his wife operate. Rosh Pina.

Tel.: 054-472-2351

Haruzula

This enchanting shop offers a myriad of beads, arts and crafts materials, and jewelry-making equipment. Rosh Pina, Tel.: (04) 693-0312

s, and jewelryequipment. Best Months aa, Nov-May

Travel Time:
4 hours
Distance:
60 km
Best Months:
Nov-May



The last of the founders' houses in Metulla, Beit Ha'ikar has been preserved in its original form exactly as it was built in 1896. The house was reopened in 1987 after renovation and it is meant to illustrate the pioneering spirit of the founders, their lives, and the hopes that they cherished in spite of the many hardships. You can see furniture and belongings used by the first settlers - kitchen utensils. farm implements, and work tools – as well as photos. There are also documents and maps that give you an idea of security, agriculture, education, and other matters at the time. One corner is devoted to the memory of the fallen of Metulla. An audiovisual presentation about the history of the site is shown by appointment. Tel.: (04) 694-0237

The North Star The Jordan

The Jordan River forms at the head of the Hula Valley from the merger of three major rivers and many other streams. Start your tour at the Tel Dan Nature Reserve (Tel.: (04) 695-1579) for a short hike to the Dan Springs, the major source of the Jordan River. The remains of the biblical city of Dan are hidden among the foliage here. Then drive to Kibbutz Dan to visit the Beit Ussishkin museum (Tel.: (04) 694-1704), which tells the story of the valley and the rivers that make up the Jordan, From here, make your way to the prehistory museum (Tel.: (04) 695-4611) at Kibbutz Ma'van Baruch to see the world's largest collection of prehistoric stone axes. A collection of antique cars and the photography museum at the Tel Hai Industrial Park (Tel -(04) 681-6702, www.iparks.co.il) are the next stop. Then visit the Beit Hashomer Museum (Kibbutz Kfar Gil'adi, Tel.: (04) 694-1565) on your way to Metulla, Israel's

Active Suggestions



Manara Cable Car

Take a ride on the longest cable car in Israel and enjoy other exciting attractions like massive slides down the mountain.

Tel.: (04) 690-5830

Singing Tour

Take a musical tour of the Hula Valley with one of the many tour guides who also double as a song master, such as Dr. Itai Plaot.

Tel : 052-297-1119



northernmost village. The quaint houses of this village still line the main street, but today they are filled with restaurants, shops, and hotels. For something out of the ordinary, go to the Canada Centre (Tel.: (04) 695-0370, www.canada-centre.co.il), which houses Israel's only Olympic ice skating rink. Before heading back, stop at the Iyon (Tanur) Stream Nature Reserve (Tel.: (04) 695-1519, winter only) to see a quirky, slender waterfall.



Dining Out

O Doris

Surprisingly some of the best eateries in Israel are next to gas stations and Doris is no exception. The restaurant established alongside a premium butcher shop serves some of the best steaks and hamburgers in the country.

Rosh Pina

Tel.: (04) 680-1313

Beit Shalom

Located in a century-old stone house, this restaurant tries to recreate the flavours of the local, rustic cuisine of the farmers who founded Metulla a century ago. Make sure to try the mushrooms with goat cheese, cream, and pecans or the lamb kebabs with sumac.

28 Harishonim St, Metulla,

Tel.: (04) 694-0767

⊙ Top Rope

This park for the adventurous boasts a ropes course with 20 rope bridges to navigate and a 300-foot zip line. *Kibbutz Kfar Blum*, *Tel : 1-700-50-66-11*

Kfar Blum Kayaks

Experience the Jordan River and the Hatzbani Stream in a whole new way: by navigating it in a kayak.

Kibbutz Kfar Blum, Tel: 1-700-50-66-11 Travel Time:
4 hours
Distance:
80 km
Best Months:
All Year



Ein Zeitim

If the beauty of the Biriya Forest isn't enough, head over to the Ein Zeitim recreation area, which is right next to the ruins of the medieval Jewish community of Ein Zeitim. In addition to picnic facilities, water fountains, and restrooms, the site boasts an active recreation area where all sorts of gym equipment can be enjoyed outdoors in the midst of the forest. Biriya Forest

Dishon ATV Trips

Learn how to drive an ATV on the training route and then explore the fields and vineyard of the moshav or venture even further to explore the slopes of the Naftali Mountains.

Moshav Dishon,
Tel.: (04) 699-7758

Active Suggestions



Rihaniya

One of the two Circassian villages in Israel, visit its small museum which tells the story of this unique community.

Tel.: (04) 698-7940

The Rift Rim Naftali Range

Start this tour by driving up from Kirvat Shemona via Kfar Gil'adi to Kibbutz Menara, at the top of the ridge. If someone else drives your car up to Menara to meet vou, vou can ascend by the cable car from Kirvat Shemona instead. Take in the view at the top of the range and them drive southwards. enioving the magnificent views along the way of Lebanon, Mount Hermon, the Golan Heights, and the Hula Valley. At Yiftah Junction. turn right and drive to the Kadesh National Park. Follow the path from the parking lot to the Greek temple standing in the middle of the field. Return in the direction that you came from. Just before the junction, turn left into the Ela picnic grounds. The centrepiece here is the ela (the Atlantic pistachio tree). which is the largest and oldest (around 1,000 years) tree in Israel. At the Yesha Junction, turn right and follow the road through some of the best natural scenery in

Kadesh National Park

The Greek temple here probably was dedicated to Helios. The ruins of Kadesh lie all around you, including elaborately decorated sarcophagi.



the Galilee toward Safed. A little further on is the Dalton plateau, where a stop at the Dalton Winery (Tel.: (04) 698-7683, www.daltonwinery.com) is in order.

Then continue south, enter the village of Dalton (not on Saturday), and follow the signs to the Grave of Rabbi Yossi Haglili.

The tomb of this Talmudic sage has become a pilgrimage site for young yeshiva students. It is also one of the best lookout sites in the Galilee.



Wineries

• Galil Mountain Winery

Known for its dry red wines, the winery offers tours, workshops, and tastings in various languages. The seventh largest producer of wine in Israel, it produces one million bottles annually with the grapes from its six nearby vineyards, each with different climatic conditions. Kibbutz Yir'on,
Tel.: (04) 686-8740.

www.galilmountain.co.il

Rimon Winery Inspired by the n

Inspired by the many health benefits of pomegranates, this winery mainly produces dry, dessert, and sparkling wines as well as port from pomegranates grown in the orchards of the moshav.

Moshav Kerem Ben Zimra, Tel.: (04) 682-2325, www.rimonwinery.com

Scenic Views

Agamon Lookout

Opposite the entrance to Ramot Naftali on Route 886, follow the sign to the lookout point with a view of the Agamon and the Hula Valley Nature Reserve.

Keren Naftali

About half a kilometre south of Ramot Naftali on Route 886, turn onto the dirt track that leads up the horn-like hill with a spectacular view and ruins of a temple.

Travel Time:
4 hours
Distance:
60 km
Best Months:
Nov-May







Overnight

Mitzpe HaYamim Resort

For a tranquil break visit this hotel and spa in the Eastern Galilee, which rests on 15 hectares of luscious land with walking paths, pools, and water features.

Rosh Pina, 12000, Tel.: (04) 699-4555, www.mizpe-hayamim.com

Naftaly Estate Boutique Hotel

A luxury five-room boutique hotel rests on heavenly pastoral grounds, with panoramic views of the Upper Galilee, its vineyards, mountains, and lakes. Moshav Ramot Naftali,

Tel.: (05) 4590-0919, www.naftaly.co.il

❸ Villa Tehila

A family-run country inn situated in the 120-year-old mountainous village of Rosh Pina offers a cozy stay in an old stone farmhouse dating from 1882. They even have their own petting zoo and aviary for all the family to enjoy. *Rosh Pina, 12000*,

Tel.: (04) 693-77880, www.villa-tehila.co.il



Upper Galilee: Green Mountains

A land of lush Mediterranean vegetation, tiny, hilltop villages home to a dozen different communities, and orchards and vineyards galore, the entire Upper Galilee is a real hidden gem. It boasts pilgrimage sites, spas, rustic getaways, and mountaintop hideaways. This is a place to take in with ease. Enjoy the quiet, natural scenery and local ethnic food, with a winemaker, goatherd, farmer, and olive oil producer thrown in for just the right organic mix.



Artists' Quarter

The artists of the Land of Israel have been attracted to Safed since the 1920s. After the War of Independence. several artists asked the mayor to allow them to settle in the abandoned Arab houses of the Old City. The municipality responded positively and the news spread rapidly among Israel's artists. The blossoming of the Safed artists' quarter reached its peak in the 1960s, when over 50 famous artists lived there. In the 1970s the artists moved away. Today, reminders of the heyday of the Safed artists' quarter still can be seen everywhere: sculpted signs, statues, paintings, figures drawn on the walls of the houses, painted windows, and carved doors. Some of the artists' houses have been converted into museums.

Travel Tips



Ascent of Safed

The Jewish sages forbid the study of kabala before the age of 40, but if you want to get into some Kabalah Light, try Ascent.

Shabbat Bride Safed

Kabbalah, Jewish mysticism, was not spawned in Safed. But for 80 years that spanned most of the sixteenth century, Safed was the place where Kabbalah got its boost. The best mystical minds of the Jewish world made their way to this hilltop town to try to understand the creation and the Creator.

You can still feel the impact of those eight decades today in the alleys of Safed. Wander through the Old City and step in to the old synagogues; even though many of them were built after the sixteenth century, they still emanate the spirit of the sages from Safed's golden age.

Then walk through the galleries and studios of the artists that have made Safed their home.

Beit Hameiri, a museum in the Mekubbalim Quarter (Tel.: (04) 697-1307), shows how life was in this town in past times. Meanwhile the Kadosh Dairy (Tel.: (04)

Bat Ya'ar

Apart from the view of the Hula Valley, this forest ranch runs an excellent restaurant and offers horse and jeep trips in the surrounding mountains.



692-0326) is famous throughout the country for its excellent cheeses. The candlestick makers of Safed (42 Ha'ari St, Tel.: (04) 692-1093) should not be missed. Towards evening, particularly on the eve of the new Jewish month (the eve of the new moon), make your way to the ancient synagogue of Safed — you don't have to dip in the freezing ritual bath, but lighting a hand-dipped, locally made candle on one of the tombs of a famous mystic is mandatory.



Travel Tips

• The Mikve of the Ari

Only men can dip in this little ritual bath in the middle of the ancient cemetery of Safed. The water is freezing and there is always a crowd. The quick dip in the pool is in the nude, of course.

Shabbat

The town takes on a special feeling on Friday night, with prayers and singing in all the synagogues and festivities at the Breslov yeshiva.

Grave of Pinhas Ben Yair

Need a divorce? Walking seven times, clockwise, around this innocuous grave is a mystical remedy that will take care of the details. Nobody admits it, but watch carefully and you will see someone circling the grave and ancient tree next to it.

Dining Out

Maximillan

Reminiscent of an Italian piazza, Maximillan is a pleasant place to stop for a lunch and enjoy a rich salad of seasonal fruit. Tel: 077-788-2887

Fresca Zehava

This Tunisian-style eatery serves up excellent coucous and spicy pumpkin salad, among other delicacies. 26 Jerusalem St, Tel.: (04) 697-4342

Travel Time:
4 hours
Distance:
10 km
Best Months:
All Year



Lecha Dodi

The expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492 reverberated throughout the Jewish world. The uprooting of families, widespread conversions and the Inquisition's reign of terror revived the debate about the meaning of Jewish existence. In the years that followed, messianic hopes were rekindled along with interest in Kabbalah in the search for a path to redemption. This coincided with the conquest of the Land of Israel by the Turks, who welcomed lewish settlement. In the sixteenth century, Safed became a centre of Jewish learning, to which sages, and mystics were drawn. The Jews of Safed formulated philosophies, composed liturgies, and instituted customs that are part of Jewish life to this day.

Sages & Saints Miracle Makers

Start the tour at the grave of Yonatan Ben Uziel, hidden deep in the Biriva forest near Safed. This famous second-century sage is known as a matchmaker: the hundreds of scarves attached to the grave together with the supplicants' notes attest to the sage's abilities. From there, make vour way to Meron and visit the tomb of Rabbi Simeon Bar Yohai. probably the most famous of the ancient Jewish sages. For lunch. stop in Gush Halay at the Giscala restaurant at the entrance to the village, or a little further on at the Lebanese Hummus restaurant. Take the first street to the right. the restaurant is on the corner. both establishments showcase the wonders of natural Galilean food. Return to the main road and drive past Sasa junction to the turning that leads to Mount Meron, the highest mountain in Israel. The road will take you to summit. From the parking lot at the top of the

Safed Sages

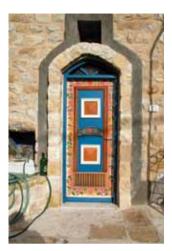


Moshe Cordovero

Born around 1522 to descendants of Spanish exiles from Cordova, Cordovero instituted the custom of studying outdoors at ancient holy graves in Galilee.

Ø Joseph Caro

Born in Spain in 1488, Caro settled in Safed in 1536 and wrote Beit Yosef, in which he assembled all the halachic rulings to date, and Shulhan Arukh



mountain, set out on the clearly marked trail that runs around the summit. This one-hour jaunt runs through a hauntingly beautiful forest with views of the entire Galilee. At the junction with the trail that leads down the mountain bear left, in order to complete the walk around the summit and return to the parking lot. In winter and spring, the quantity of rare forest flowers on this walk, from orchids to Greek cyclamens, is mind boggling.



Safed Sages

Rabbi Ya'acov Beirav

Born in 1475 in Castile. Spain, Beiray was a student of Rabbi Yitzhak Abuhay. Eighteen years old at the time of the expulsion from Spain, he moved to North Africa and was appointed rabbi of the city of Fez. Several years later, he moved to Egypt and went into business, becoming a wealthy man. Eventually. he left his business, settled in Safed, and became the head of a veshiva. His pupils included Joseph Caro, Moshe Cordovero, and Moshe of Trani, among others. He tried to reinstate the practice of ordination of rabbis, but had to flee to Damascus after his activities were reported to the authorities. He later returned to Safed and died there in 1546.

S Isaac Luria

Born in Jerusalem and raised in Egypt, the Ari settled in Safed around 1569 and was joined by pupils seeking to study his unique system of Kabbalah.

Moshe Alsheikh

Born in Turkey, he came to Safed to be ordained as a rabbi by Joseph Caro. Afterward, he opened his own yeshiva. Alsheikh died around 1600.

Travel Time:
6 hours
Distance:
60 km
Best Months:
All Year



1 The Synagogue of Peki'in

Maintained for many years by a single Jewish family that never left Peki'in over the ages, make sure to meet the caretaker when visiting this historic synagogue.

Diwan Al-Mukhtar

In the heart of Peki'in. beside the spring, stands an ancient building from the Ottoman era that serves as the museum of Peki'in and of Druze heritage. Hear lectures and stories about the diwan that was the mukhtar's home, the village history, the Jewish settlement in Peki'in, the Druze customs and heritage. explanations and stories about the secret religion, and the relations between the Druze and the State of Israel.

Tel.: (04) 957-1880

Perched Villages Pekei'n Beit Jann

Start the tour in the village of Beit Jann, the highest village in Israel. Eniov local hospitality at this Druze village and drive up to the shrine of Nebi Khader, overlooking the Lower Galilee. This is a favourite spot for hang gliders, who jump off the cliff - be careful. Then drive to the village of Peki'in, where the cave of Rabbi Simeon Bar Yohai is located. The village spring is said to have miraculous qualities, as do the massive old vines that drape themselves around the verandahs of the houses. Enjoy the hospitality of the small local museum near the spring, and make sure to stop off at the famous olive oil soap factory and a local bakery to taste the special Druze pita bread. Then drive to the little hilltop village of Fassuta. The road winds around the mountains until it reaches this unique Melkite Greek Catholic community. The church at the top of the hill is fascinating and the quaint alleyways are the best that

Dining Out



• Etz Hatut Bamayan

This restaurant under the mulberry tree beside the spring in Peki'in offers all types of Druze dishes and delicacies. *Tel.: 052-8285631,052-8285811,052-8585855*

Olive Press

The restaurant is next to the ancient synagogue in Peki'in. In the past, the site served as an olive press and flour mill in the village. *Tel.: (04) 997-3118*



hideaway villages can offer. From here make your way to Abirim a small village home to B&Bs and tourist attractions. Drive back along the road you arrived on for 500 metres until you see a dirt road leading off to the left signed with Jewish National Fund signs and marked in red. Follow this scenic route all the way to the Goren Forest. Drive to Goren and take the road to the coast for a swim at Akhziv or one of the beaches north of Nahariya.



Soap and Candles

Safta Gamila

Safta Gamila began gathering medicinal herbs in the Peki'in hills over 30 years ago. She turns them into therapeutic creams, oils for various skin problems, and soaps.

Min Hateva

This shop sells scented candles, personalised candles as well as a wide range of medicinal soaps, oils, creams, gemstones, incense, and natural scented soaps.

Tel.: (04) 957-5932

Dr Dabour

Dr Dabour Laboratories strives to create healthy, nourishing, chemical-free skincare products using natural, local ingredients. Beit Jann,

Tel.: (04) 980-371112

Safa's Restaurant

Enjoy authentic Druze food and spectacular views at the restaurant that Marzuk and Safa Harb established. Beit Jann,

Tel.: (04) 980-3567

Morel

At the entrance to Abirim, European cuisine, with a Galilee touch including local wines and products. *Mitzpe Abirim, Tel* : 054-586-3546

Travel Time:
Full Day
Distance:
80 km
Best Months:
All Year









Overnight

• Indigo

Between the domed roofs and handmade curtains, Ella and Pablo Ariel's artistic talents are evident throughout the guesthouse they designed, built, and decorated behind their home in Mitzpe Abbirim.

Tel.: (04) 987-0034

Canaan Spa Hotel

This modern spa, restaurant, and hotel can be found perched on top of Mount Canaan overlooking the city of Safed.

Mt. Canaan, Safed, Tel.: (04) 699-3000

Bikta B'Kadita

Five wood cabins nestled away in the Galilee mountains, on the southern slope of Kutar Mountain, offer unique accommodation, hiking trails, jeep trails, and horse riding. They also have their own winery.

P.O.Box 1052, Safed, Tel.: (04) 692-1963, www.kadita.co.il

Amirim Guest Houses

Amirim, was established as a vegetarian and vegan village, resting at a height of 600 meters above sea level. Choose from 15 different wood cabins in the most remote, romantic, and natural settings.

Fifth house from the entrance, Amirim, Tel.: (04) 698-9803 www.amirim.com







Festivals and Pilgrimages: Annual Celebrations

The tranquil beauty of the Galilee has made it the setting for a wide variety of events that attract visitors of all sorts from all over the globe. Theatre lovers and performers flock to the Acco Festival of Alternative Theatre, birdwatchers fill the Hula Valley to catch a glimpse of the millions of birds migrating between Asia and Europe, and athletes run circles around the Sea of Galilee. Whether you love music or film or something entirely different, the Galilee has a festival for you.



World-Class Oil

Israel produces less than 10,000 of the three million tons of olive oil produced worldwide each year, yet Israel's olive oil is acclaimed worldwide, as is its research on olive trees

At a recent contest in Greece, first place for varietal oil made from Koroneiki olives was not awarded to an oil made from Koroneiki olives grown in their native Greece, but olives grown in Israel, Meanwhile, farmers all over the globe are growing Barnea and other olive varieties that were developed in Israel. One of the more intriguing statistics is that some 90 percent of the olive oil produced in Israel is graded extra virgin - meaning it is not processed, contains no additives, and has less than 0.8% acidity.

October Press Olive Festival

October is the month that olive presses around the country begin their picking season, and marks the opening of the annual Olive Branch Festival (Tel.: 077-323-5555, www.gogalilee.org) which spans two weekends of events across the Galilee, offering visits to olive presses, open homes, workshops, tours, gourmet meals, and alternative health treatments. Exact date varies annually. Among the many activities. the hikes are a great means to discovering the hidden gems of the valley groves, with trails offering a glimpse into the history of the area. After hiking through the ancient groves, visit Hanania Farm (Tel.: (04) 980-7614. Moshav Goren). headquarters of the local Olive Council which offers guided olive oil tastings and workshops, and the farmers' market, set in an ancient courtvard and the elegant home. built as a residence for the British governor of the Galilee.

Local Olives



Barnea

Bred at the Hebrew University's Faculty of Agriculture, this aromatic variety has the perfect blend of bitterness and pungency.

Askal

This tasty variety bred at the Hebrew University's Faculty of Agriculture is the hope of the future due to its high yield of oil when grown in hedgerows.



Embrace the Galilean Bedouin experience by partaking in spice and herbs workshops, with evening Bedouin storytelling sessions and celebrations. Availability for tent lodgings in a Bedouin grove (*Tel.: (O4) 678-1312)*. Or visit the Ein Dor Museum (*Tel.: (O4) 677-0333)*, to experience each stage of pressing oil, from picking to crushing in a millstone and tasting at the end. Olive oil in all kinds of containers — from bottles to cans — is of course available throughout.



Travel Tips

Hacienda Birger

The Birger family has been producing award-winning olive oil and wine on their farm at the foot of Mount Tabor for three generations. Tour the farm's olive groves and vineyards.

Moshav Kfar Kisch, Tel.: (04) 662-0788, www.birgerfarm.co.il

Kfar Kisch Visitors Centre

Learn about olive oil, wine, sheep's milk cheeses, and other items produced at Moshav Kfar Kisch directly from the people who make them. The visitors centre can arrange a variety of activities, workshops, and seminars in English or Hebrew as well as meals at the local dairy's restaurant. Moshav Kfar Kisch,

Tel.: (04) 662-0788, www.havat.co.il

Souri

One of the two strains of olive native to Israel, it is named after the ancient Phoenician port city of Tyre. It is a rich, aromatic, and often bitter oil.

Mabali

Named for the city of Nablus, the Nabali olive has grown throughout Israel for ages. It is known for its delicate, fruity flavour and pleasant texture.

When: October What: Workshops, Tours, Tastings



Two Wheels

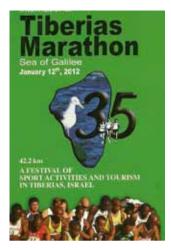
If you prefer cycling to running, plan your visit for November so you can participate in the annual bike happening that is one of the largest sporting events in Israel, Bikers come from near and far to ride along one of the routes set up on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, Participants can choose between routes of different lengths and on different terrains - from flat routes close to the shore to challenging hilly routes slightly farther away from it. The event ends with a fair at 7emach Beach.

Run along the Lake Galilee Marathon

As it turns out the circumference of the Sea of Galilee is exactly the length of a marathon, this has brought into creation not only the Sea of Galilee Marathon, but also having it held annually at the beginning of January just after Hannuka and Christmas, So if you want to run around the famous Gospel lake, this is your chance. The International Tiberias Marathon (The Israeli Athletic Association, 10 Shitrit St. Tel.: (03) 648-6256.www.tiberiasmarathon.co.il), follows the course of the Sea of Galilee, and is known for being the 'lowest' marathon in the world, some 200 metres below sea level, at the foot of the Jordan Valley. The asphalt course is flat and fast, and follows the shoreline of the Sea of Galilee, starting in the main streets of the ancient city of Tiberias, winding through ancient historical landmarks of the Jordan Valley, crossing the Jordan River, and continuing to Kibbutz







Ein-Gev before running through Capernaum, Tabgah and Migdal, back to Tiberias. Enjoy a week of celebrations and festivities in and around the Tiberias area before the marathon, where sportsenthusiasts can partake in hikes, sports conferences, and walking tours, or for those who prefer to sit on the sidelines, soak up the festive atmosphere against the exquisite backdrop of the Galilee hills, autumnal sunshine, and rippling waters.



In the Water

An annual swim marathon attracts thousands to the Sea of Galilee every September, Routes of different lengths, from 1.5 kilometres to 6 kilometres for both amateurs and professionals of all ages are set up in the lake. Entire families participate in the event, with children swimming alongside their parents in the festive atmosphere. Boats and rafts are stationed along the routes, allowing participants to take a rest mid-swim. Most participants are more focused on having fun than competing and swim at their own leisurely speed, though prizes are awarded to those with the fastest times in each category.



When: January What: Marathon



Haifa Theatre

Founded in 1961, the Haifa Municipal Theatre is known for presenting new plays by leading Israeli playwrights such as Joshua Sobol as well as classics by Shakespeare and Moliere and more modern classics by Edward Albee. Its repertoire generally deals with the Arab-Israeli conflict and issues that are important to Israeli society, such as the Holocaust. unemployment, immigration, and the integration of new immigrants. While the Haifa theatre's troupe travels to stages throughout Israel and performs at theatre festivals in Europe and North America, take the opportunity to see it on its home turf. 50 Pazner St. Haifa. Tel.: (04) 860-0500. www.ht1 co.il

Alternative Theatre Acco Festival

The ancient port city of Acre, surrounded by walls, has hidden deep in its heart, at the foot of the Citadel, an enchanted garden. This garden is enclosed by stone walls, with a moat and quard tower. In 1980, the Acco Festival of Alternative Theatre (www.accofestival.co.il) arrived on the other side of the wall. separating the garden of the Citadel from the Knights' Courtyard, which is where the first performances took place; and bringing with it new energies and life to the ancient fortress. The fascinating city of Acre hosts this annual festival every October. The city is steeped in history: it has been inhabited since the Phoenician period and has recently been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site, with its mosques. khans, ancient baths, and Crusader fortress ruins providing exquisite venues for theatre performances. creating a connection between the







theatrical piece, the place, and the audience.

This four-day festival encompasses plays, music, dance, street theatre, guest productions/installations, and features theatrical competitions, along with offerings of local and foreign theatre troupes, performing at a range of venues and historical sites around the vibrant city. Book early for interesting performances by young aspiring Israeli actors from all walks of life and communities.



Klezmer Festival

The sound of Klezmer music fills the streets of Safed for three days every summer. Klezmer bands and fans from all over the world converge on this mountaintop city. The musicians perform both traditional and unusual renditions of the music that was played at weddings and celebrations in Jewish villages throughout Eastern Europe for centuries. The Klezmer festival permeates the entire city of Safed, with performances in concert halls, the ancient cobbled allevs lined with art galleries and studios, synagogues, and large stages set up under the stars especially for the event. The festivities also includes children's activities. masters classes, tours, and seminars.

www.safed.co.il



When: October What: Theatre



Israeli Film

The Israeli film industry has taken off in recent vears, as funding for films increase and the graduates of the country's first film school, the Sam Spiegel Film and Television School, mature professionally. The melodramatic, B movies that dominated the Israeli film industry for most of the State of Israel's existence have given way to sophisticated plots, cinematography, and animation. Director Ari Folman's Waltz with Bashir (2008), which has been awarded a shelf-full of international prizes, is perhaps the best example of the new Israeli cinema. Its success has inspired other ambitious filmmakers to follow in Folman's footsteps and produce a handful of world-class films.

Haifa International Film Festival

The Haifa International Film Festival (www haifaff co il) is held on the beautiful Mount Carmel. overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. It is the leading cinematic event in Israel and brings together an ever-growing audience of 70,000 spectators along with hundreds of Israeli and International filmmakers and television producers each year, to premier some 170 new films. This convivial festival runs for 10 days in the period of Succoth, in October, and offers outdoor events, and film screenings.

The programme is complemented by live music and concerts of film scores, film poster exhibitions, and animation shows. Guests can enjoy gala premieres with a glass of wine in the festival garden, or go to a preview, giving them a chance to see productions months before they are screened in Israeli cinemas. For those in the 'biz', workshops and conferences are







available on a variety of subjects (check programme for details), while filmmakers compete for titles such as Best Mediterranean Film, Filmmaker of Tomorrow, and Best Israeli Feature, among others. Set in Mediterranean surroundings, this festival is a true feast of talent, cinema, and culture, a sure way to enjoy another of Israel's hidden gems.



Festival of Festivals

Haifa celebrates its multicultural population every year with the 'Festival of Festivals'. Held on weekends throughout the entire month of December. it is a joint celebration of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The event epitomises the values of coexistence. living together in peace and harmony, and mutual respect of all six religions in the city. Activities are centered in the Wadi Nisnas neighbourhood and extend to the German Colony at the foot of the Bahai Gardens. They include an antique fair, a food fair of local delicacies, ethnic music and theatre performances. and a crafts fair. In addition. there are parades, dance performances, children's theatre, and arts and crafts workshops and activities for children.



When: October What: Films and Celebs



Meron's Saints

Simeon Bar Yohai

One of the five pupils of Rabbi Akiva that survived the Bar Kokhba Revolt, Rabbi Simeon Bar Yohai's efforts to continue Judaism earned him a death sentence, which he evaded by hiding in a cave with his son, Eleazar, for 12 years.

Eleazar Ben Simeon

After spending his childhood in a cave, Rabbi Eleazar Ben Simeon went on to become a noted scholar. Unlike his father, he worked for the Roman authorities that his father had revolted against.

O Johanan Hasandlar

Like Rabbi Simeon Bar Yohai, he was one of Rabbi Akiva's outstanding pupils who was known for his dedication to continuing the study of Torah and Jewish life

Lag Ba'omer Ascent to Meron

Pilgrimage is a central part of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. Each religion has its holy sites, where miracles occurred, saints are buried. and prayers are recited. Making a pilgrimage to the graves of saints and holy men on the anniversary of their deaths has long been a part of Jewish tradition, but it has become even more mainstream in recent years. The most popular tomb is that of Rabbi Simeon Bar Yohai, which attracts upwards of 300.000 visitors on the anniversary of his death, which happens to coincide with the minor holiday of Lag Ba'omer. between the festivals of Passover and Shavuot

This second-century sage's fame comes from the popular belief that he authored the *Zohar*, the central book of Jewish mysticism. Though scholars have concluded that the book was written some 1,000 years after Rabbi Simeon Bar Yohai's death, the spirit of mysticism hovers over his tomb at Mount Meron, with pilgrims pushing their way to his grave to ask him to make a miracle for them. The pilgrimage on the anniversary of his death is far from mournful – instead it is a celebration of his life, complete







with spirited singing and dancing. feasting, and, for three-year-old Hasidic boys, the first haircut. All through the day and night, packed buses carry singing pilgrims up the steep, winding road to the tomb. The area around the tomb is full of stands and kiosks hawking candles to light by the tomb, copies of the Zohar, books of mystical writings, refreshments, and blessings in exchange for a donation. If you want to stretch your leas, you can make the climb to 'Elijah's Seat', a prominent rock on the mountain overlooking the tomb complex. The best time to climb is in the late afternoon.



The Zohar

Literally the 'Book of Splendour', the Zohar is the main book of Jewish mysticism. Much of it is attributed to Rabbi Simeon Bar Yohai, however scholars believe it actually was written by Moses de Leon. who lived in Spain in the thirteenth century. The Zohar consists of several sections. most of which are written in Aramaic. The main section is a mystical commentary on much of the Torah. Other sections describe the activities and musings of Rabbi Simeon Bar Yohai and his fellow sages as they explore the mysteries of the universe. The book is supposed to be read only after you reach the age of 40, in order to protect immature minds from the mind-blowing revelations about the godhead.



When: May What: Mystical Festival



Birding Sites

• Agamon Nature Park

Enjoy the restored wetland, paved paths, bird-ringing station, bicycles, golf carts, and safari wagons at this unique nature park. Tel.: (04) 681-7137, www.agamon-hula.co.il

Hula Nature Reserve

Explore this wetland habitat that is home to tens of thousands of aquatic birds. *Tel.:* (04) 693-7069, www.parks.org.il

O Jordan Valley Center

The International Birdwatching Centre of the Jordan Valley near Kibbutz Kfar Ruppin is on the main migration route of white storks and other birds. Enjoy a guided tour or volunteer at the bird-ringing station.

Tel.: (04) 648-0612, www.birdwatching.org.il

Hula Bird Festival Winter Migrants

Located at the crossroads of Furasia and Africa, where several bioregions overlap, the Hula Valley attracts one of the greatest diversity and abundance of wildlife and birds found along the northern Great Rift Valley, As a result, the Hula Valley is one of the most important stopover and wintering sites for southbound bird migrations through the Great Rift Valley. In the late autumn, thousands of Common Cranes. Pelicans, as well as over 25 different species of raptors flock to the Hula Valley. As part of five weeks of international birding events in the Galillee, A Winter of Rirds 2011 celebrates the first Hula Valley Bird Festival (www.hulabirdfestival.org) giving visitors a spectacular opportunity to witness the winter migrations, with a week of events in November. Be sure to get out your birds check-list, as visitors can enjoy bird-watching tours. A







different tour is offered every day of the week. Budding photographers can join seminars, or the photographers' package, with local species such as the Black Francolin, Pygmy Cormorant and three species of Kingfishers offering extraordinary photo opportunities. And a week of scientific conferences will enlighten the bird-enthusiast about the bird migrations, as daily talks will be hosted by leading international scientists.



Birding Sites

Ein Afek Nature Reserve

This reserve is the last remnant of the landscape of the Na'aman Stream flood plains near the coast. *Tel.:* (04) 877-8226, www.parks.org.il

Ma'agan Michael

On the Mediterranean coast, this undeveloped area between the cities of Tel Aviv and Haifa is on a major migration route for waders and sea birds.

Tel.: 073-241-3843, www.israbirdcenter.org

Ramim Cliff

The Ramim Cliff is the highest cliff in Israel and can be ascended by cable car. Overlooking Kiryat Shemona, it is the perfect place to watch raptors soar above the Hula Valley.

Tel.: (04) 690-5830



When: November What: Birdwatching Festival



Taking Time: Rambling Through Galilee

With 10,000 kilometres of marked hiking trails, Israel is one of world's best-kept hiking secrets. Israel's varied landscapes, ranging from the lush Mediterranean vegetation of the mountains of Galilee to the coastal plain and the local deserts that are part of the world desert belt, offer the hiker a myriad of different hiking experiences within a short distance of one another. Hiking trails are marked with a coloured stripe, which is blue, green, red, or black, between two white strips. The entrance to the trail is marked with a sign.

To Love Bay and Beyond

A hike along the seashore from Dor-Habonim Beach to Caesarea.

To reach the beginning of the trail at Dor-Habonim Beach, turn off on the access road to Moshav Habonim, take the bridge over the Haifa-Tel Aviv highway, drive a few metres to the left, and turn right on the dirt road to the beach. At a makeshift gate, you will be asked to pay a parking fee of NIS 20. Continue to the large parking lot, beside a concrete wall

Beside the wall is a box containing free leaflets from the Israel Nature and Parks Authority (INPA) introducing visitors to the reserve. A trail marked in red leads up from the parking lot to the top of the ridge. North of this point stretches the reserve's northern cove. Camping in the cove is permitted.

Right below the parking lot is Shell Cove, a little inlet on the kurkar (calcareous sandstone) ridge covered with a carpet of shells that are thousands of years old and have only recently washed up on the shore. (Hikers are asked to leave the shells in



place.) This is only one of the reserve's many picturesque coves, which were created by the waves that nibble at the ridge. Dor-Habonim Beach is, in fact, perhaps the most beautiful beach in Israel.

Walk southward on the ridge. In May, the scallop-leaved sea lavender will be in full bloom. The headed thyme blooms in summer. In the southern part of the reserve, where the red trail leads away from the shore and a green trail branches off from it, is The Hill of Blossoms — named for the many tulips that bloom there in March.

The green trail returns to the parking lot, the end of the short route through the reserve. For this hike, follow the red trail to Love Bay, a no-man's-land between the nature reserve and Tel Dor National Park. Further south you come upon Tel Dor.

This ancient site, one of the most important cities in the ancient Land of Israel, situated in a lovely part of the coast, has not been developed for visitors.

The town apparently dates back to the Middle Canaanite period (eighteenth century BCE). Excavations were first conducted there in 1923-24, by a British expedition led by Prof John Garstang (founding director of the Department of Antiquities in the British Mandate of Palestine). In

1950, parts of a Roman theatre were exposed, and since the 1980s, an expedition from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, led by Prof. Ephraim Stern, has been working there.

In Hellenistic and Roman sources. Dor is said to be located between the tip of the Carmel and Caesarea; Roman geographer Eusebius places it 9 miles north of Caesarea. To make matters even more certain, excavators at the site have uncovered a lead weight from the Hellenistic period inscribed with the name Dor. North of the tell south of Love Bay, are the ruins of a seaside Roman theatre. On the edge of the bay are walls that are the remains of warehouses and a dock

On the southwestern side of the tell is its main cove, which was used as an anchorage. South of the cove are the remains of a temple from the Hellenistic period – apparently dedicated to Poseidon, the god of the sea. Dor's streets were built in this period; only a few have been excavated.

South of the temple rises the acropolis, containing remains of a Crusader citadel; it affords a clear view of Dor's southern cove, which features the remains of a port from the Late Canaanite period. Parts of Dor's massive fortifications have been uncovered and the remains of a Byzantine church have been found east of the town.

Equally exciting finds were discovered off the coast of Dor, whose beach is still called Tantura, for the Arab village that stood here. 'The King of the



beach' is Kurt Raveh, a Dutchman who came to Israel as a volunteer during the Yom Kippur War in 1973 and stayed. Raveh has taken part in excavations at Tel Dor, served as an inspector for the Israel Antiquities Authority, established the Glassworks Museum in Nahsholim, and fished treasures out of the sea. Today he is director of the Aqua Dora Diving Club, which is also the base for Haifa University's underwater archaeological research.

In Dor Bay and its surrounding area, 17 boats have been discovered so far, from periods ranging from the Canaanite era to the twentieth century. In ancient times, boats entered Dor's harbour from the south, via an opening in the marine platform. They attempted to move northward, the water in the port flowed southward, and the boats

Photographs: Doron Horowitz

crashed into the shoals and sank. A ton and a half of old coins have been found on Tantura Beach, as well as many pottery vessels. Cannons and other weapons have also turned up here — some of the gear of 12,000 French soldiers who lightened their load during Napoleon's infamous retreat from

South of Dor, the ridge and deep coves are gone. There are no trail markings, but you can't get lost. Simply walk southward along the beach, right between the sea and the fishoonds.

Nahal Taninim's outlet into the sea is one of the most romantic places along the beach to watch the sunset. The mouth of Nahal Taninim has to be waded across. In summer the water is kneedeep. Do not attempt to cross the river before the month of May as the current can be lethal. The Ottoman Turks built an arched bridge here for German Emperor Wilhelm II, who passed through in 1898 on his way from Haifa to Jerusalem. Its remains are clearly visible

South of the riverbed, on Tel Taninim, you come upon the Israel Trail, which leads down to that point from the Carmel Range and continues southward to Caesarea. This is the only place in the country where the Israel Trail runs near the seacoast. Tel Taninim contains the remains of Krokodilopolis (City of Crocodiles). which flourished in Roman and Byzantine times. In the Crusader period, the town was known as Turris Salinarum (Saltworks Tower), perhaps because salt was produced in the area. The hike ends with a three-kilometre beach



hike. The trail continues parallel to the Roman aqueducts along the beach. The time to arrive at the end of the hike, at Caesarea beach, is towards evening, as the sea swallows up the sun and shrubs of evening primrose light up with their large yellow flowers.

Route length: 17 km.
Difficulty: Moderate.
Start point: Dor-Habonim Nature Reserve.
Entry via the access road to Moshav
Habonim (Route 4, kilometre marker 183).
Instead of entering the moshav, turn onto
the dirt road leading to the beach (it's
signposted), carefully cross the railroad
tracks, and leave your car in the reserve

Fee: Summer – NIS 20 per car, NIS 60 per bus.

Access: From Route 4.

parking lot.

Access: Holli Route 4

End point: Aqueduct Beach in Caesarea, or further, in the Caesarea National Park. Duration: 7-8 hours, including dips in the sea.

Admission fees: None. Opening hours: None.

Equipment: Shoes or sandals for wading and plenty of drinking water. (Fill-up point: Tantura Beach.)

Remarks: Crossing Nahal Taninim at its mouth is permitted only in summer, when the current in the riverbed is slow. It is absolutely forbidden to cross the channel after a rainfall.

Pickup point for cars: Aqueduct Beach in Caesarea.

Map: Carmel Hiking and Trail Map (No. 4).

Rabbi Yossi Hagalili's Neighbourhood

Graves of ancient Jewish sages abound in the Galilee. Follow this fun hike to visit some of the lesserknown graves. The view is an added bonus.

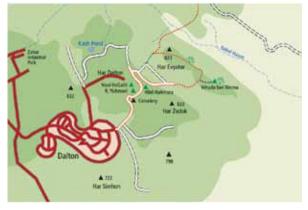
From the entrance to Moshav Dalton, follow the signs and drive to the grave of Rabbi Yossi Hagalili at the top of Mount Dalton. The signs will lead you to the back gate of the moshav and along a road leading up to the summit. Yossi Hagalili was a Galilean Jewish sage who lived during the second century. Like the Mishnaic sage known as Honi the Circlemaker, Yossi Hagalili was regarded as a rainmaker. His grave at Dalton is mentioned in a report from 910 CE by the Karaite, Sahal ben Matzliah. According to this tenth-century document, it was customary for childless women to pray at the grave. The grave remains a popular pilgrimage site. Every summer, on Tu Be'av (15th of Av), the festival of courtship and love, a local celebration is held at the site.

Return by car along the same route. Just after the back gate, make a left into the moshav and drive along the security fence until you see another exit leading eastward. The exit is marked with signs directing you to the graves of Yishmael ben Yossi Hagalili and Yehuda ben Timma.

Follow the paved road, which has red trail markings (2155). After passing the cemetery, you'll come to signs leading to the grave of Rabbi Yishmael, Park and go up to the grave, which is in a little whitewashed compound graced by an olive tree. It is on the left side of the road. You can also get here by foot from Yossi Hagalili's grave by walking down the south face of Mount Dalton, past the remains of the village of Dalta. Medieval sources state that the grave of Rabbi Yishmael, son of Yossi Hagalili, is at Dalton, This reference is problematic, however. Yossi Hagalili's son was Rabbi Eliezer: Rabbi Yishmael is related to Abba Halafta.

After visiting the grave, you can continue by car along the red-marked dirt road until it curves to the right, leading you to an apple orchard. Park here, off the road. Look around until you find the green trail markings painted on the orchard's fence posts. Follow the markings through a cow pasture. At the far end





of the pasture you might see a tame-looking little fox. The fox has become accustomed to human visitors and expects to be fed. As foxes are known carriers of rabies, keep a safe distance from this wild animal. The green trail ends at a junction with a red trail. Turn right along the red trail (2156), and go up Mount Evvatar. The trail winds through the brush and bushes, and you might lose sight of the markings every now and then. Patience and a guick search or careful backtracking will keep you on the path. Once atop the mountain, vou'll have a spectacular view of the Alma Plateau, the Nahal Dishon riverbed, the northern border settlements, and the Hula Valley. In winter, wildflowers bloom in abundance on this hill, among them the rare wild hyacinth, which is dark blue. Follow the red trail eastward along the mountain. At the point where the path turns south, just past a small clump of trees, you'll come to a signposted path that leads to the grave of Yehuda ben

Timma. The grave is 150 metres inside a military firing range area. Hikers and pilgrims still enter the area, but be aware that you are doing so at your own risk. Yehuda ben Timma was a second-century Galilean sage, his grave in Dalton was mentioned by the sixteenthcentury Jewish traveller Moshe Basula, who visited the area in 1522

After that, continue along the red trail back to the orchard. Turn right along the red trail markings and back to your car.

Route length: 3 km. Difficulty: Easy. Start point: Moshav Dalton. Access: Route 886. End point: Ring route. Duration: 1.30 hours. Admission fees: None. Opening hours: None. Equipment: Regular. Remarks: Moshav Dalton is a religious

settlement. Cars cannot enter the moshay on Saturdays and Jewish holidays. Pickup point for cars: End of route. Map: Upper Galilee Hiking and Trail Map (No. 2)

Yiftah Canyon to Goma Junction

One of the most beautiful spring hikes in Israel. This route descends the 800-metre-high Naftali range cliff into the Hula Valley, offering spectacular views of Mount Hermon, the Golan, and Lebanon.

This six-kilometre route is a great spring walk down a breathtaking mountainside. The trail leads down the Naftali Mountain Range straight into the Hula Valley. In April and early May, wild hyacinths, anemones, and tulips are in full bloom all around.

Drive north on Route 886 past

Kibbutz Yiftah, until you come to kilometre markers 65 and 66. To the right along this stretch of road, you'll see an opening in the fence along the road with a wide path leading through it.

This is where you should begin your descent on foot into the Yiftah Canyon.

Park carefully. There is no parking area here and the road is dangerous. As the tour ends at the Goma Junction, you will need to arrange for a driver to pick you up there.

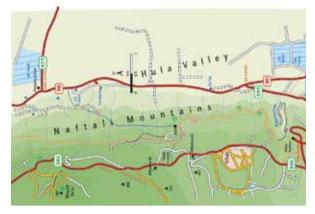
The canyon is actually a chasm jumbled up with rocks. Small metal grips allow for a fun time while climbing through. Explore — it will take longer than you think. The chasm continues on the other side of the road. From the canyon, a trail marked in blue (trail 2060) leads off into the woods. Follow it to a paved road that leads to a farm further down the slope.

Continue following the blue trail markings as they lead you along the road down the hill to a point where the trail leaves the road. Descend here along a wooded slope to a gate in a fence. Go through the gate, but please make sure to close it afterward. The trail curls around a hill. The top of the hill has a few farm buildings on it.

Suddenly, you will reach the edge of the cliff face that drops off into the Hula Valley. Find a spot to stop and enjoy the view here with its fish ponds, channels, and new flooded areas called the Agamon (the small lake). Opposite is the Golan Heights, with its two lines







of volcanoes clearly visible. Snow-capped Mount Hermon looms in the distance, with the Lebanon Valley and the mountains of Lebanon further back.

The trail goes along the cliff for awhile and then begins to descend into the Hula Valley. At first, it follows a course through natural woods, planted pine forests, and heavy scrub. In May, the flowers, bushes, and trees on the slope burst into various shades of yellow. The ground is

covered with the best, and the rarest, of Israel's wild flowers. Large oak trees and ancient Atlantic pistachios dot the path. They are the last remains of the ancient forests of Naftali. The trail ends at Route 90, beside kilometre marker 464, near the Goma Junction.

Route length: 6 km.
Difficulty: Family hike.

Start point: Route 886, between kilometre markers

65 and 66.

Access: From Yiftah Junction.

End point: Route 90, near Goma Junction.

Duration: 4 hours.

Admission fees: None.

Opening hours: None.

Equipment: Regular.
Remarks: Spectacular family hike during

Remarks: Spectacular ramily nike during the late winter or early spring (March-May). Be careful getting out of the car at the start point; you might not be visible to approaching cars driving round the bend on the road.

Pickup point for cars: End of route. Map: Golan and Hermon Hiking and Trail Map (No. 1).



Keshet to Sharach

A hike between two very different caves in the limestone formations of the Upper Galilee. One is a collapsed rainbow cave in a cliff, the other is a warren of karst tunnels.

From Adamit Park, begin hiking on the green-marked trail (No. 2180 on the trail map). The beginning of the trail is paved in order to allow wheelchair access to the Keshet Cave. The cave's walls and roof have collapsed. leaving only a huge limestone arch still intact, from which the cave's Hebrew name. Keshet (arch) derives. The top of the arch is a popular jumping-off point for rappellers, who can thus descend some 30 metres along the exposed cliff face before landing on the firm around of the former cave floor. There's a good chance that on arrival at the cave you'll see a few Spiderman-like types roaming around.

From this lookout point, high up on the side of a hill, you will also have a lovely view of the coastal region and the Upper Galilee, the Haifa Bay, the Carmel Range to the south and west, and the Nahal Betzet riverbed in the valley below.

A look down at the goat dung on the floor of the cave will tell you in a minute that generations of shepherds, right up until modern times, have used the cave for shelter from pouring rain and sweltering heat. After inspecting the cave, follow the ridge of the cliff eastward on the red-marked trail (2207). The trail passes to the



south of Kibbutz Adamit and 3 km later descends into the riverbed of Nahal Betzet. At the iunction of the blue trail (2206) and the red trail, turn left. The trail here is shaded by large oriental plane trees. In Israel's hot climate, these trees need plenty of water. They grow happily along this riverbed, where water flows all year long from the Karkara Springs, which feed a number of shallow pools further down the blue trail. Follow the trail through the large oleander bushes that bloom in pink in summer. Continue along the trail for another kilometre up the riverbed. At this point, Nahal Betzet flows through an impressive wide canyon with 300-metre-high limestone cliffs on both sides. The cliff face is pockmarked with caves and cavities, typical of limestone rocks in a land with

abundant winter rains. The trail crosses the riverbed and reaches a fork in the canyon. Here you come to a trail junction. The black trail leads to the Bedouin village of Arab el-Aramshe at the top of the Adamit range. We will follow the blue trail, that leads off to the right. The trail (2206) now enters Nahal Sharach and leads through Mediterranean woods which feature common oaks, pistachio trees, officinal storax, Judas trees, and ivv. The whole area is also laced with ferns (sharach in Hebrew), after which the riverbed and cave are named. The lush overgrowth makes this a cool hike, even on a hot day. Half a kilometre after the fork in the riverbed, you'll see the Sharach Cave on your left. Take a flashlight and enter the cave, observing the stalactite formations created by water seeping through the calcium carbonate of the cave walls. The Israel Nature and Parks Authority has marked a short walking route through the narrow cave, complete with a ladder; you'll exit from a second opening that is a bit to the east.

past the cave, for about 1.5 km along a gentle uphill incline. You'll emerge from the woods into the JNF Sharach picnic site.

Route length: 7.6 km. Difficulty: Easy-Moderate. Start point: Adamit picnic site, west of Horvat Adamit. Access: From Shlomi, drive east on the Northern Border Road (Route 899) and turn left onto the access road to Kibbutz Adamit, Continue 4 more km in the direction of the kibbutz, turning right on an unpaved road marked in green that ends at the JNF's Adamit picnic site, where the trail begins. End point: Sharach Picnic Site, 100 metres west of the entrance to Granot Hagalil. Walk 1 km on the blue-marked unpaved road to the parking area. Duration: 7 hours. Admission fees: None Opening hours: None. Equipment: Flashlight. Remarks: If you want a shorter route (4 km), start your hike at Kibbutz Eilon and descend along a kibbutz back road to the pumping station and Karkara Springs, Follow the trail to the Sharach Cave.

Pickup point for cars: End of route.

Map: Upper Galilee Hiking and Trail Map



(No. 2).

Α Abirim 65 Abu Christo 27 Abu Salah 41 Acco 69, 74 Acre 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 74, 85 Acre Old City 28 Adamit 90, 91 Adelina Restaurant 30 Agamon Lookout 57 Agamon Nature Park 80 Agenda 15 Ahuzat Zamarin Hotel 20 Akhziv 30, 31 Akhziv National Park 31 Akkotel 28 Al-Jazzar Mosque 26 Almagor 42, 43 Alon Hagalil 35 Alreda 46 Amiad Junction 41 Amirim 66 Amirim Guest Houses 66 Andarin 47 Antiquity Museum 14 Agueduct beach 14 Ascent of Safed 60 Ashdot-Ya'akov 49 Askal 70 Atlit 16

B'Vadi Etzel Ayali 32 Bahai Gardens 21, 22, 26, 27, 77 Barnea 70 Basilica of the Annunciation, 46 Bat Ya'ar 60 Bat Yaar Ranch 53 Beach of Dor 14 Beatitudes Walk 43 Beit Aaronson 18 Beit Daniel 18 Beit Jann 5, 64, 65 Beit Oren 16 Beit Shalom 55

Beit She'arim 35

Beit Shturman 36

Belvoir 37 Berachta 32 Bet Gabriel 45 Bethlehem Hagelilit 34, 35, 38 Betzet 90 Bikels Café 37 Bikta B'Kadita 66 Binyamina 18, 19 Binyamina Winery 19 Biriva Forest 53, 56 Bistro de Carmel 19

 $\overline{}$ Cactus 46 Caesarea 13, 14, 15, 20, 83, Caesarea Golf Club 14 Caesarea Harbour 15 Caesrea National Park 15 Café Rishonim 49 Canaan Spa Hotel 66 Capernaum 42, 43, 73 Carmel Caves National Park 17 Carmel Forest 20 Carmel Forest Spa Resort 20 Carmel Man 17 Carmel Mountains 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 Carmel Yevulim 35

Cashtonio wine cellar 19 Chocolata 53 Church of Saint Joseph 47 Church of the Apostles 42 Church of the Beatitudes 42, 43 Church of the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes 42 Crocodile Farm 44

Colony Hotel Haifa 24

D

Dag Al HaDan 52 Daliyat el-Carmel 16, 17 Dalton 57 Dan Caesaria 20 Dan Springs, 54 Daughters of Jacob Bridge 53 Dead Sea 39 Decks 41

Decks 9	Goren 65, 70
Deganya Alef 48	Grave of Pinhas Ben Yair 61
Deganya Bet 48 Diana 47	Grave of Rabbi Akiva 41 Gush Halav 62
	GUSII FIdiav 62
Dishon ATV Trips 56 Diwan Al-Mukhtar 64	Н
Domus Galilaeae 42	Habonim 14
Donna Gracia Street 40	Habonim beach 14
Dor 14, 20	Hacienda Birger 71
Dor Bay 84	Hai Bar Carmel 16
Doris 55	Haifa 25, 26, 27
Douzan 23	Haifa 5, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24
Dr Dabour 65	74, 76, 77, 81 83, 84, 85, 90
Druze Heritage House 16	Haifa Bay 16
Diuze Heiliage House To	Hakdera Shel Noga 35
E	Hamam al-Basha bathhouse 26
Ein Afek Nature Reserve 81	Hamat Tiberias 44
Ein Dor 71	Hanamal 24 22
Ein Gev 42, 49	Hanania Farm 70
Ein Harod 36, 37, 38	Harod Valley 36, 38
Ein Harod Country Guest House	Haruach HaGalil 32
38	Haruzula 53
Ein Hod 14, 15	Hattin 40
Ein Hod Artists' Village 14	Hazuk Halavan 30
Ein Yizrael 36	Hecht Museum 22
Ein Zeitim 56	Hefzi-bah 36
El Mejana 47	Helena 15
El-Umdan caravansary 27	Hotel Kibbutz Nahsholim 20
Elbabour Galilee Mill 46	Hula Valley 51, 52, 53, 54, 55,
Eleazar Ben Simeon 78	56, 57, 58
Enchanted Garden 26	Hula Agamon 52
Etsusha 31	Hula Nature Reserve 52, 80
Etz Hatut Bamayan 64	Hummus in the Market 26
F	
Fassuta 64	Isaac Luria 63
Fattouch 23	Isfiya 16, 17
Fauzi Azar Inn (Images in folder)	
50	J
Fresca Zehava 61	Janco-Dada Museum 14, 15
	Jesus Boat 44
G	Jezreel Valley 33, 34, 35, 36,
Galil Mountain Winery 57	37, 38
Gan Hashlosha 36	Johanan Hasandlar 78
Genoese Quarter 26	John Deere Land 34
German Colony 22, 24	Jordan river 54
Gesher 37	Jordan Valley Centre 80
Glass Factory 14	Joseph Caro 62, 63

K Kadesh National Park 56 Karei Deshe Guest House 50 Keren Naftali 57 Kfar Blum Kayaks 55 Kfar Gil'adi, 54 Kfar Kisch Visitors Center 71 Kfar Tayor 40 Khan el-Umdan 27 Kibbutz Adamit 30 Kibbutz Adamit 90.91 Kibbutz Ashdot Ya'acov Ihud 49 Kibbutz Deganyah Aleph 49 Kibbutz Ein Gev 42, 49 Kibbutz Ein Harod 36, 38 Kibbutz Ginosar 44 Kibbutz Hagoshrim 52 Kibbutz Kabri 30 Kibbutz Kfar Blum 55 Kibbutz Kinneret 45. 49 Kibbutz Merhavia 36 Kibbutz Nahsholim 14, 20 Kibbutz Sedot Yam 14 Kibbutz Yagur 17 Kibbutz Yir'on 57 Kimmel Bagilboa 37 Kinnrot Valley 48 Kiryat Shemona 52, 56 Knights Hall 26 Knight Youth Hostel & Guest

Ĺ

Levona Grove 42 Limousine 35

House 28

Korazim 43, 50

Ktse Hanahal 45

NΛ

Ma'agan Michael 81 Ma'yan Baruch 54 Magic Touch Spa 38 Maimonides (Rambam) 41 Makura Ranch 14 Manara Cable Car 54 Marinado Restaurant 42 Maximillan 61 Megiddo 34

Megiddo Water System 34 Meir the Miracle Maker 41 Menara 56 Merhavia 36 Meron 62 Meshek Zak 34 Metulla 54, 55 Migdal 73 Mikve of the Ari 61 Min Hateva 65 Misk Stage Bar 47 Mitzpe Abirim 65 Mitzpe Amukah 53 Mitzpe HaYamim Resort 58 Mitzpe Rosh Hanikra 30 Mizpe Hayamim, Rosh Pina 52 Montfort Castle 30, 31 Morel 65 Morganfeld 31 Moshav Almagor 42 Moshav Beit She'arim 35 Moshav Dishon 56 Moshav Hayogev 35 Moshav Kerem Ben Zimra 57 Moshav Kfar Kisch 71 Moshav Liman 31 Moshav Livnim 45 Moshav Ramot Naftali 58 Moshav Sede Ya'acov 34 Moshav Shavey Zion 28 Moshay She'ar Yashuy 52 Moshe Alsheikh 63 Moshe Cordovero 62, 63 Mount Canaan 52, 66 Mukhraka 17 Muscat Restaurant 52 Museum of the First Aliya 19

Ν

Nabali 71
Naftali Range 56
Naftaly Estate Boutique Hotel 58
Nahal Yagur 17
Naharayim 49
Nazareth 46, 47, 50
Nechalim 53
Nesher 17

Neve Hagar 38 Neve Shaanan 24 Nisco Museum of Mechanical Music 15

\cap

Ohel Yaakov Synagogue 18 Okashi Museum 26

Р

Pausa 52 Pekei'n 64 Peki'in 64, 65 Phoenician city of Dor 14 Pilgrim's House 43 Pinhas and Gaston Guest House 28 Pisan Harbor 27 Pub Gosh 52 Pundak Hajachnun 34

R

Rabbi Ya'acov Beirav 63
Rainbow Cave 30
Ramat Hanadiv 18
Ramat Yishai 35
Ramim Cliff 81
Ramparts Walk 26
Rihaniya 56
Rimon Winery 57
Roberg Restaurant 45
Roman Theatre 15
Rosh Hanikra 29, 30, 31
Rosh Hanikra 5
Rosh Pina 52, 53, 55, 58
Rothschild Mansion 24

Ç

Safa's Restaurant 65 Safed 5, 9 Safed 57, 60, 61, 62, 63, 66 Safed 75 Safta Gamila 65 Sasa 62 Scots Hotel, Tiberias 50 Sea of Galilee 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50 Sea of Galilee Trail 43 Seuda Began Eden 52 Shababik 46 Shabbat 5, 60, 61 Sharach 90, 91 Shuni Fortress 18 Simeon Bar Yohai 62, 64 Simeon Bar Yohai 78, 79 Singing Tour 54 Souri 71 Spicy Way Farm 35 St Peter's Church, Tiberias 40 Sudfeh 47 Synagogue of Peki'in 64

T
Tabgah 73
Tabor 34
Tel Aviv 4
Tel Dan 52, 54
Tel Yizrael 36
Templar Tunnel 27
Templars Boutique Hotel 24
Tiberias 40, 41, 43, 44, 50
Tishbi Winery 19
Tishreen 46
Tmarim Plus 44
Top Rope 55
Turkish citadel 26
Tzel Tamar Restaurant 49

п

Ugata Cafe 49 University of Haifa 16, 23 Upper Galilee 52, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66 87, 90, 91 Uri Buri 27 Usfiya 17

٧

Vered HaGalil 50 Vered HaGalil Guest Farm 50 Villa Carmel Boutique Hotel 24 Villa Tehila 58 Vision Gallery 53

W

Winter Lupines 40

Yardenit 45 Yarmukh 45, 49 Yiftah 88, 89 Yiftah Canyon 88 Yiftah'el Winery 35 Yigal Allon Centre 44

Ζ Zichron Ya'acov 5, 18, 19 13

Israel Government Tourist Office United Kingdom and Ireland 020 7299 1100

THINKISRAEL.COM