

SJBC HOLY LAND TOUR ITINERARY

PRE EXTENSION BEGINS HERE:

DAY 1 – Monday: DULLES / TEL AVIV

Tour members are welcomed this evening at JFK International Airport, departing on Turkish Airlines via wide body aircraft arriving in Tel Aviv the next day. Meals served on board.

DAY 2 – Tuesday: TEL AVIV / TIBERIAS

Upon arrival in **Tel Aviv** our guide who will be with us for the time we are in the Holy Land meets us. Continue not far from Tel Aviv, the main commercial city in Israel. We travel parallel to the coast and go to the famous **Sea of Galilee** where we check into our hotel for dinner and overnight.

"Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?" They said, "Rabbi, where are you staying?" Come," he replied, "and you will see." So they went and saw where he was staying..." (John 1:38-39)

DAY 3 – Wednesday: TIBERIAS / UPPER GALILEE

"The Head of all those Kingdoms" (Joshua 11:10) The Sources of the Jordan

This morning we leave Tiberias and head north via **Magdala** into the valley of Gennesareth to Ginossar to view the **New Testament boat** found below the sea and to visit the kibbutz. Then on to **Chorazin**, through the Hula Valley to **Hazor**, ruins of the powerful Canaanite city destroyed by Joshua and rebuilt by King Jabin and then by Solomon as a chariot city to command upper Galilee.

We continue to the northern limits of Jesus' travel as we cross the River Hatzbani to **Dan**, where we combine a nature walk beside the Upper Jordan with views of the ancient ruins, topped by the Israelite high place that supported a golden calf (1 Kings 12). Then a short drive to **Banias (Caesarea Philippi)**, dedicated to Pan the Greek god of pastures, flocks and shepherds; here Peter made his great profession of faith, recognition of Christ Jesus (Matthew 16). Driving along the foot of **Mount Hermon**, we ascend onto the **Golan Plateau** for a magnificent view of upper Israel. Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

THE HOLY LAND BEGINS HERE:

DAY 1 – Tuesday: DULLES / ISTANBUL / TEL AVIV

Depart USA "and said to him, 'LEAVE YOUR COUNTRY AND YOUR RELATIVES, AND COME INTO THE LAND THAT I WILL SHOW YOU" (Acts 7:3).

DAY 2 – Wednesday: TEL AVIV / TIBERIAS

Upon arrival in Tel Aviv our guide who will be with us for the time we are in the Holy Land meets us. Continue in close proximity to **Tel Aviv**, the main commercial city in Israel. We travel parallel to the coastal plain northwards and go to the famous **Sea of Galilee** where we check into our hotel for dinner and overnight. **"Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?" They said, "Rabbi, where are you staying?" Come," he replied, "and you will see." So they went and saw where he was staying..." (John 1:38-39)**

DAY 3 – Thursday: SEA OF GALILEE / BET SHEAN

This morning we begin our day by sailing on the **Sea of Galilee** in a wooden boat modeled on one from Jesus' time; they "got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum..." (John 6). After landing, "When he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside, and sat down" (Matt. 5:1). We drive up to the **Mount of Beatitudes** (Matthew 5-7). We then descend to **Tabgha** where Christians have long remembered the first feeding of the multitude (Mark 6) and nearby, the breakfast of John 21. We continue to **Capernaum** where Franciscan archaeologists believe they have uncovered the house of Peter (Mark 1 and 2), in the home town of Jesus..." He went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulon and Naphtali" (Matt. 4:13). We drive to the northern end of the Sea of Galilee and circle

eastwards. Bypassing at **Beth Saida**, the fishing village of the Gospel, home town of Peter, Andrew, and Philip (John 1:44). Here, like Capernaum and Chorazin, Jesus performed many of his miracles, healed a blind man, and cursed all three towns for their failure to repent. In Luke's account, the feeding of the 5000 occurred in the area of Beth Saida. We continue driving around the eastern shores of the Sea of Galilee next to **Kursi** which is the "Gergesa" of Matthew's Gospel where the evangelist locates the miracle of the swine. The early Christians were commemorated the site with a church heading south to Ein Gev where we can stop for a St. Peter's Fish lunch.

After lunch we drive completing the full circle around the lake and the drive south a short distance through the Jordan valley to **Beth Shean** aka Scythopolis. Here we shall climb the Tel and view the setting for the death of King Saul (I Samuel 28 - II Samuel 1). We shall then survey the magnificent Roman and Byzantine ruins: theater, bathhouses, ancient rest rooms, market areas, and colonnaded streets. We drive back north to Yardenit the modern Baptismal site located at the exit of the **Jordan River** from the Sea of Galilee. We will end our day with the renewal of our baptismal vows before we drive to our accommodation on the shores of the Sea of Galilee for dinner and overnight.

DAY 4 - Friday: NAZARETH / MEGGIDO / CAESAREA / JERUSALEM

"We are going up to Jerusalem." (Matt. 20:18).

We drive west to **Nazareth**. Travelling through **Cana** of Galilee where Jesus performed his first Miracle, turning water into wine (John 2). We proceed to **Nazareth**. We spend some time getting acquainted with Jesus' home town, visiting its spring, where Mary would have done her family's laundry, in the ancient village, to the Church of the Annunciation. Ascend the Mount of the Precipice at the brow of Nazareth to an overlooking surveying the **Valley of Jezreel**, synonymous with Armageddon. We then drive through the valley to the mound of **Megiddo, Har Megiddo** in Hebrew, which gave its name to Armageddon. We then ascend **Mt. Carmel**, site of Elijah's confrontation with the prophets of Baal. From there we drive towards the Mediterranean coast travelling south along the coastal highway to Caesarea by the Sea. We enter **Caesarea Maritima** to explore this Roman bridgehead to the east, which became the Christian springboard to the west. After the visit this ancient harbor, we board our bus and we head up the historic Beth Horon road (Joshua 10:10) to the Benjamin Plateau, passing ancient Gibeon and continuing on to Jerusalem. Finally, atop Mt. Scopus, we behold majestic **Jerusalem**. Check in to our hotel for dinner and overnight.

DAY 5 – Saturday: JERICHO / QUMRAN / MASADA

"While he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at table, a woman having came with an alabaster jar of ointment of pure nard very costly, and she broke the jar, and poured it over his head." (Mark 14:3)

We drive thru Bethany the town of Christ's anointment and home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus. From there we drive through the Judean desert into the Jordan Valley and head to **Jericho**. At Jericho, we visit the tell of this oldest city and view the traditional mountain of Jesus' temptation. Driving south, we drive to **Qumran**. Here we view Cave # 4, which contained the greatest quantity of Dead Sea scrolls. We continue south to **Masada**. Ascend by cable car to the top, visiting Herod's mountain bunker and the last strong hold of the Jewish Revolt against Rome (66-73 AD). We enter the nature reserve of **Ein Gedi**, rich in flora and fauna, and walk to a lovely waterfall. Here we can see several caves, one of which is possibly the cave that brings to mind the biblical reference (1 Samuel 24:1-3) "When Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, he was told, "Behold, David is in the wilderness of Ein Gedi." Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel and went to seek David and his men in front of the Wild Goats' Rocks. He came to the sheepfolds by the way, where there was a cave; and Saul went in to relieve himself. Now David and his men were sitting in the inner recesses of the cave." We conclude our day with floating in the **Dead Sea** (at minus 1390 feet, as low as you're ever likely to get), before we head back to Jerusalem for dinner and overnight.

DAY 6 – Sunday: MT OF OLIVES / SOUTHERN WALL / BETHLEHEM

"If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace" (Luke 19:42)

We start the day with an orientation to Jerusalem from the **Mt. of Olives**. We then walk the traditional Palm Sunday route to the church known as Dominus Flevit ("Our Lord weeps"). After viewing the Golden Gate, we walk downhill to **Gethsemane**, where we take time to meditate on the Gospel text. Boarding our

bus we drive to the Dung Gate just inside we walk to the **Southern Wall excavations**. We then examine the ruins near the south side of the Temple complex, including steps where we may be certain that Jesus and the disciples walked, and then to the slopes of Mt. Zion there we will visit the **Upper Room** and **King David's Tomb**. Driving south, we visit Solomon's Pools, Jerusalem's main source of water for almost 2000 years. Passing the monastery of Hortus Conclusus ("the sealed garden") in Artas, we go to Shepherds' Fields. We conclude the day with a visit in **Bethlehem**, walking through its alleys and markets to the Church of the Nativity. Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

DAY 7 – Monday: OLD CITY / UPPER ROOM / GARDEN TOMB.

"He has risen!" (Mark 16:6)

After breakfast we transfer to the Dung Gate, we walk up to the **Western Wall** Judaism's holiest site. We ascend to the **Dome of the Rock** and the al-Aqsa Mosque, the third holiest site of Islam, located on the traditional site of the ancient Temple Mount the al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, it is believed that here the Temple once stood. Just to the north we find the **Pools of Bethesda** (John 5) and **St. Anne's Church**, the church is perfectly preserved from the Crusader period – with remarkable acoustics. We then follow the Way of the Cross (**Via Dolorosa**) through the bazaars as far as the **Holy Sepulcher**. From there we walk through the Christian Quarter along the Arab Souks and past the Armenian Quarter. Exit the Old City at Mt Zion to the grounds of a church called **Peter in Gallicantu**, which affords the best view of early Jerusalem from the west. (Here, the Assumptionist Fathers suggest, was the house where the High Priest Caiaphas interrogated Jesus.). From there we board our bus and transfer to the **Garden Tomb** where we will end our day with a special visit and the possibility of having a private communion on the grounds outside the city walls.

DAY 8 – Tuesday: JERUSALEM / BEN GURION / DULLES

"So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you." (John 16:22)

Transfer to Ben Gurion Airport for your departure for the flight.

POST EXTENSION TO MORE OF ISRAEL BEGINS HERE:

DAY 8 – Tuesday: JERUSALEM / FREE DAY

The entire day is free to explore this famous city, take any private sightseeing excursions desired, shop or just relax.

DAY 9 – Wednesday: JERUSALEM / RABBI TUNNEL / YAD VASHEM / SHRINE OF THE BOOK

This morning we will board our bus for our exciting tour to the famous **Rabbi Tunnel**. Here we will enter by the Western wall plaza and go down to the foundation of the Second Temple. We will see a model that will demonstrate where we are in location to the Temple in the time of Christ. Continue along the tunnel as we proceed to the Gateway of the Priests entry to the Holy of Holies. We will continue to the **Temple Institute** where we will see the making of the instruments for the new temple. We will see how they are following the Bible for exact instructions. We will see a film explaining where the Rabbi believes the Ark of the Covenant is found.

This afternoon we will head to **Yad Vashem** and see the Museum of the Holocaust. Continue to **Shrine of the book** and the **model city of Jerusalem** at the time of the Second Temple. Return to our hotel for dinner and overnight.

DAY 10 – Thursday: JERUSALEM / DULLES

We transfer to the airport for our flight home with unforgettable memories to cherish always. Knowing we have walked in the footsteps of Jesus and the early Christians on such a memorable tour will bring new meaning to our Bible reading.