



NYC Teen Israel experience

A JCC MACCABI ISRAEL EXPERIENCE | AUGUST 12–SEPTEMBER 1, 2025

PROGRAM AGREEMENT

PRESENTED TO



Joan & Alan Bernikow
Jewish Community Center
of Staten Island

PRESENTED BY



PREPARED BY

Tal Hadad | t.hadad@jcca.org | 202.370.4027



Program Itinerary

The following is our projected itinerary; subject to reasonable change based on availability and local considerations

TUESDAY | AUGUST 12, 2025

TAKING FLIGHT

Board your flight to Israel from JFK with ELAL flight #004 from JFK at 10:30am

WEDNESDAY | AUGUST 13, 2025

BRUCHIM HA-BA'IM – WELCOME TO THE LAND OF ISRAEL

- Arrive at Ben Gurion Airport at 04:00am – meet our Israeli staff team and ascend to the south
- **Tree planting ceremon** at Neot Kedumim Park
- Welcome to Israel! ***Shehecheyanu* ceremony** and introduction to Israel at Sde Boker
- Get to know your fellow travelers over an **outdoor leadership group bonding workshop (led by staff)**
- Pool time - TBD
- Check-in, orientation, icebreakers, and dinner at our accommodations

OVERNIGHT: Tzeelim, Negev Desert

THURSDAY | AUGUST 14, 2025

JEWELS OF THE DESERT

- **Sde Boker** – Visit David and Paula Ben Gurion's modest home and learn about the remarkable story of Israel's first Prime Minister and his unique vision for Israel's future in the desert

- Continue traveling south towards the Arava Valley, stopping to explore the world's largest erosion crater at the **Ramon Crater Visitor Center**
- Off-road **desert canyon jeep tour** in Nahal Tzin
- Evening: Take part in preparing a traditional fresh-cooked "Poike Pot" meal in the desert

OVERNIGHT: Tzeelim, Negev Desert

FRIDAY | AUGUST 15, 2025

COMMUNITIES IN THE DESERT

- Experience the thrill of **sandboarding down** natural dunes in the Negev Desert
- Travel to the desert community of Yerucham where we'll celebrate Israel's Mizrachi (Sephardic) culture with a Moroccan tile art project
- Pizur lunch in Yeruham
- A cross between heritage and desert enchantment at the Desert Daughter Authentic Bedouin farm
- Time to prepare for Shabbat
- Shabbat dinner followed by Oneg Shabbat at the hotel

OVERNIGHT: Tzeelim, Negev Desert

SATURDAY | AUGUST 16, 2025

SHABBAT IN THE DESERT

- Late wake-up, staff-led Shabbat programming, followed by Shabbat lunch
- Free time, swimming, and sports at our accommodation
- Dinner at our accommodations followed by a havdala ceremony
- Evening: Staff led activity

OVERNIGHT: Tzeelim, Negev Desert mon

SUNDAY | AUGUST 17, 2025

CHALLENGES IN THE SOUTH OF ISRAEL

- Travel to **Sderot**, one of the most targeted communities, to view Israel's border with Gaza, visit the police station ransacked on October 7th and hear a testimony from a local person + Lunch
- Stop at **Re'im** where the **Nova music festival** occurred and meeting with a survivor
- **Salad Trail** – Experience the wonders of Israel's desert agriculture revolution
- **Camel riding** and **desert tent feast** at Kfar Hanokdim encampment

OVERNIGHT: Kfar Hanokdim Encampment, Judean Desert

MONDAY | AUGUST 18, 2025

MASADA: JEWISH HEROISM, DILEMMAS & LEADERSHIP

- Pre-sunrise hike up the Roman Ramp to the summit of Masada
- **Masada** – Tour of Herod's desert mountain fortress and the bastion of an ancient Jewish rebellion
- Descend Masada via the **Snake Path** and stop for breakfast at the base of Masada
- Nature walk to the desert waterfalls oasis at **Ein Gedi National Park**
- Break for lunch at IYHA Ein Gedi
- Experience effortless **floating at the Dead Sea** at Kalya beach
- Return to Jerusalem in the late afternoon and rest at our accommodations
- Evening: Explore the **Mahane Yehuda** open-air marketplace + pizur dinner

OVERNIGHT: Caesar Hotel, Jerusalem

TUESDAY | AUGUST 19, 2025

FOUNDATIONS OF JEWISH HISTORY

- Discover the foundations of Jerusalem from King David's time at the **City of David Excavations**
- **Hezekiah's Tunnel** - Cool off in the spring-fed underground aqueduct running below Jerusalem
- Enter the Old City at **Zion Gate** and explore the ancient corridors of the **Jewish Quarter**
- Free time for shopping in the historic **Cardo** area of the Jewish Quarter (pizur lunch)

- Reflections at the Kotel - The **Western Wall** - followed by a tour at kotel tunnels
- Dinner at the hotel followed by Yad VaShem perpetrations

OVERNIGHT: Caesar Hotel, Jerusalem

WEDNESDAY | AUGUST 20, 2025

LOSS AND RENEWAL IN MODERN ISRAEL

- **Yad VaShem** World Holocaust Remembrance Center
- Processing time and picnic-style lunch at **Jerusalem's Mifletzet Park**
- **Mt. Herzl National Cemetery** - Honor Israel's national leaders and fallen soldiers
- Volunteering - TBD
- Tie-in session at the hotel
- Pizur and group night out at **Ben Yehuda Street** pedestrian mall

SOVERNIGHT: Caesar Hotel, Jerusalem

THURSDAY | AUGUST 21, 2025

VALUES OF MODERN ISRAEL

- **Geopolitical tour of Jerusalem** – The seam, the wall and the future with **Neil Lazarus**
- Travel to the West Bank, stopping to explore the geo-political complexity of the region along the way
- Break for pizur lunch in Efrat, one of the largest Israeli cities in the West Bank
- Visit at the **The Menachem Begin Heritage Center** and participate in a **Junior Knesset program** an interactive, role-playing simulation of how Israel's democratic system operates
- Dinner at our accommodations
- Evening: Staff led activity

OVERNIGHT: Caesar Hotel, Jerusalem

FRIDAY | AUGUST 22, 2025

BIBLICAL HISTORY IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL

- Bike tour at the the Ella Valley
- **View the Ella Valley** from Tel Azeka - The famous site of David's battle with Goliath
- Learn the skills of an archeologist at the **Dig-for-a-Day Archaeological Seminar**
- Pizur lunch at Beit Shemesh
- Drive back to Jerusalem and prepare for Shabbat
- Kabbalat Shabbat at the kotel
- Walk back to our hotel where we'll enjoy Shabbat dinner together

OVERNIGHT: Caesar Hotel, Jerusalem

SATURDAY | AUGUST 23, 2025

SHABBAT IN JERUSALEM

- Morning; Staff-led Shabbat programming or the option to visit local synagogues
- Shabbat lunch is included at our accommodations
- **The Israel Museum** - The Dead Sea Scrolls, Temple Model, and more
- Spend the rest of the afternoon playing sports and relaxing together at **Jerusalem's Saker Park**
- Dinner at our accommodations followed by a havdala ceremony
- Evening: Night out at Mamila mall

OVERNIGHT: Caesar Hotel, Jerusalem

SUNDAY | AUGUST 24, 2025

MYSTICS OF THE GALILEE

- Depart Jerusalem and travel to the Galilee
- Meet [Avraham Levin](#), VP of Alma center, for a conversation about Israel's challenges in the north border at Mt. Adir

- Ancient **Tsfat** - Explore the historic center of Jewish mysticism in the Galilee highlands
- Check-in and dinner at our country accommodations

OVERNIGHT: Afik, Galilee

MONDAY | AUGUST 25, 2025

PERSPECTIVES FROM THE GOLAN HEIGHTS

- **Nahal Majrassa** – Get wet hiking through this tributary of the Sea of Galilee
- View Israel's neighbors and navigate former IDF bunkers at the summit of **Mt. Ben-Tal**
- **Encounter with the Druze culture** and share a traditional meal in the Golan village of Ein Kinya
- **Tel Facher** – Explore a former Syrian bunker complex on the Golan Heights overlooking the Galilee and learn about the story of master spy, **Eli Cohen**, and his contributions in the region
- Cool off **rafting down the upper Jordan River** followed by a **fresh-baked pizza dinner** in the field on the banks of the Jordan River

OVERNIGHT: Afik, Galilee

TUESDAY | AUGUST 26, 2025

A DAY IN HAIFA

- **Aqua Kef** – Experience the thrill of Israel's floating water park on the Sea of Galilee
- Break for a hummus lunch in Haifa's Wadi Nis Nas neighborhood
- Explore Haifa, Israel's most diverse city, including a tour of the **Bahai Temple Gardens**
- Spend the rest of the afternoon **learning how to surf** at Israel's rustic Dado Beach in Haifa
- Continue on to Tel Aviv, Israel's commercial and cultural capital
- Check-in and dinner at our accommodations

OVERNIGHT: Metropolitan, Tel Aviv

WEDNESDAY | AUGUST 27, 2025

JEWISH PEOPLEHOOD

- **Leket** – Volunteering project harvesting for the hungry of Israel
- **Dialogue in the Dark** - Experience the world with new senses at the Holon Children's Museum
- **Machon Ayalon** – Honor the bravery of the pioneers who helped establish modern Israel at this secret underground munitions facility
- Learn about the Jewish-Ethiopian community in Israel at [Beit Ambosa](#) in Gadera
- Dinner at the hotel
- Staff led activity at the hotel

OVERNIGHT: Metropolitan, Tel Aviv

THURSDAY | AUGUST 28, 2025

- Discover the complexity and beauty of **Hebrew graffiti art in Florentine**
- Visit **Hostages Square** and meet with family members of those who were kidnapped OR Celebrate the rich social fabric of Israel on the **Humans of Tel Aviv** with camera /smart phone camera in hand with photographer Erez Kaganowitz
- Pizur lunch in Tel Aviv
- **Museum of the Jewish People** (ANU Museum) on the campus of Tel Aviv University
- Evening: **You should be DANCING** - turn the volume on for an exceptional urban experience in the heart of Tel Aviv with **Guru ZuZu**

OVERNIGHT: Metropolitan, Tel Aviv

FRIDAY | AUGUST 29, 2025

CELEBRATE THE SPIRIT OF TEL AVIV

- **Palmach Museum** - Honor the bravery of those who helped establish the State of Israel
- Walking tour of Tel Aviv's historic **Neve Tzedek** and trendy **Rothschild Boulevard** neighborhoods (view Independence Hall from outside - currently closed for renovations)
- Browse the **Nahalat Binyamin street festival** and grab lunch at the **Carmel Market** (pizur)

- Kabbalat Shabbat by the beach
- Shabbat dinner at the hotel

SATURDAY | AUGUST 30, 2025

SHABBAT IN TEL AVIV

- Shabbat programming options - Bringing Israel home with the staff
- Shabbat lunch is provided at our accommodations
- **Israeli martial arts** workshop on the beach with Budokan
- Afternoon: Enjoy free time on the **beaches of Tel Aviv!**
- Havdallah ceremony and dinner at our accommodations
- Evening: Group night out at Tel Aviv's **Sarona pedestrian mall**

OVERNIGHT: Metropolitan, Tel Aviv

SUNDAY | AUGUST 31, 2025

LOOKING AT THE FUTURE

- Visit the **Peres Center for Peace & Innovation** in Jaffa
- Tour the **ancient port city of Jaffa** and browse the colorful **Jaffa flea market** (pizur lunch)
- Pool time, final group wrap-up session, and closing dinner BBQ at Dekel Country club
- Return to Ben Gurion Airport for your flight back to JFK with ELAL flight #001 at 1:00 am

MONDAY | SEPTEMBER 1, 2025

SHALOM U'LHITRAOT

- Arrive back to JFK at 05:50am