

Judy's Jerusalem Guide

Jerusalem, 1 Day

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Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: What to do if you only have one day in Jerusalem--a city holy to three religions, with ancient history and a modern lifestyle.

Judy's guide will give you an overview of the city and let you experience both the ancient and the modern, people, sites and culture all in one day.



Day 1 - Jerusalem



Mount of Olives Jewish Cemetery
Ancient and modern Jewish cemetery

Jerusalem Centre for the Performing
Arts
Theater for Culture-Seekers



QUICK NOTE

location:

Mount of Olives Road Jerusalem



Mount of Olives

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

The best place to see the entire Old City laid out before you.

DESCRIPTION: This panorama is best viewed in the morning, as later in the day the sun is in the wrong direction. From the Seven Arches Hotel (a popular snapshot stop-off for coach parties) the gleaming gold roof of the Dome of the Rock lies below in the Temple Mount complex and beyond it, the silver dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. As well as the Old City in the foreground, from this raised point it is also possible to see the City of David, the Kidron Valley and the new suburbs of West Jerusalem. © wcities.com

MY NOTE: Since you only have one day in Jerusalem, this is the best place to get an overview and a feel for both the beauty and complexity of this ancient city that is holy to Christians, Muslims and Jews.

Grab a cab to get there as early as you can to try to beat the busloads of tour groups. From this mountain top that separates Jerusalem from the desert and the Dead Sea to the east, you'll get a magnificent view of the 35 acres of the Temple Mount and the Dome of the Rock.

Directly behind the Muslim holy site are the gray domes of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, while the modern buildings of the Jewish Quarter are visible to the south inside the walls of the Old City.

Take in the view on the horizon to the north, where you'll be able to spot the distinctive outlines of the churches on Mt Zion, and then look to your left, where the southern modern neighborhoods of Jerusalem touch the biblical Hinnom Valley. Now you understand why King David wrote in the Psalms: "Jerusalem, hills surround her."



Judy Lash Balint

location:

Mount of Olives Jerusalem



Mount of Olives Jewish Cemetery

DESCRIPTION: A paved road leads from the top of the Mount of Olives to the back of the Basilica of the Agony at the bottom. Along this route, you may enter various sections of the oldest continuously used Jewish cemetery in the world. An ancient tradition holds that those buried here will be resurrected first when the messiah arrives. Here you will find the grave of the modern mystic, Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, and other important Jewish religious figures. Here too is buried Menahem Begin, who as Prime Minister initiated peace talks with Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. A guide to the cemetery is essential.



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The local custom is to place a stone on the cenotaph to indicate a visit. © wcities.com

MY NOTE: Walk a couple of hundred yards north on the road from the viewpoint to the pathway that descends down the Mt of Olives through the largest and oldest Jewish cemetery in the world. Look across at the walls of the Old City to the double closed Golden Gate. This is where many believe the Messiah will reveal himself and the resurrection of the dead will take place.

On the path down the mountain, visit the Dominus Flevit Church that commemorates Jesus crying over the fate of Jerusalem. Peek into the Second Temple burial caves discovered there and see a few of the beautifully decorated ossuaries.

A few hundred yards further on is the Russian style Church of Mary Magdalene with its seven gold onion domes. In the garden, look for the remains of an ancient flight of steps described in 9th century Latin documents. Inside the church don't miss the 19th century paintings by famous Russian artists. Below the Russian church is the Garden of Gethsemane and the Church of All Nations. Don't be out off by the crowds or the aggressive vendors but bear in mind that the site closes daily between noon-2:30 p.m.

You should be able to hail a cab on the main road in front of the church to take you to your next stop--probably lunch! For a complete change of pace from the historic and religious sites of your Jerusalem morning, ask the driver to drop you at the Agrippas Street entrance to Machane Yehuda--western Jerusalem's food market.

You won't have to look far for some of the best in casual MIddle East fare. Whether it's a fast felafel, or a sit-down meal of grilled meats and salads or a casual cafe sandwich, you'll find the freshest ingredients and the friendliest service. For dessert, walk through the market alleys for a choice piece of seasonal fruit or a tasty pastry from any one of the small bakeries along the way.

Take in some of the best people-watching in town-Jerusalemites of every kind shop in Machane Yehuda, so you'll be sure to hear any number of languages being spoken. Once you're refreshed, its time to head back to antiquity. Either walk through to the Jaffa Road side of the market where the #13 or 18 bus will take you within a 10 minute walk to Jaffa Gate, or get a cab from the same spot and ask to be dropped at Dung Gate.

If you've opted for the bus, take your map and walk down David Street inside the Old City and follow the signs down to the Western Wall.

If your taxi has dropped you at Dung Gate, walk in through the security machines and you'll find yourself at the Western Wall plaza.

You'll be standing in front of the holiest place in the world for Jews--the only remnant of the Temple built by King Herod. Tradition has it that the Divine Presence has never left this place, so people of all faiths come here to soak that in.



After your contemplation at the Wall, retrace your steps out of Dung Gate, turn left and walk down the short hill following the brown signs to the City of David.

At the Visitor Center, (*6033 from any phone inside Israel for detailed info) make your choice between a number of tour options depending on your stamina.

This is the heart of Biblical Jerusalem, Israel's largest archeological park where you'll be able to see and imagine life in King David's time. This is where Jerusalem sprang to life, before the construction of the Temples.

There are many sites to explore here, either with an English guide or with a self-guided tour—both available from the Visitors Center. Be aware that there's a lot of walking, much of it on uneven surfaces and steps.

contact:

tel: +972 2 560 5757 fax: +972 2 566 2153 http://www.jerusalem-theatre. co.il

location:

20 David Marcus Street Jerusalem 91040



Jerusalem Centre for the Performing Arts

DESCRIPTION: Located near the corner of Chopin (in the Rechavia District near the president's house), this modern complex opened its doors in 1975 and houses the Jerusalem Theater (Sherover Theater), Henry Crown Auditorium, and the smaller, more intimate Rebecca Crown Hall. Original Israeli plays and Hebrew translations of foreign classics and modern works are performed in the theater's main hall; visiting troupes also use the main hall for performances in foreign languages. The theater also hosts performances of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra and the Israel Chamber Ensemble; the Israel Philharmonic also performs here. From October through early June, the Henry Crown Auditorium hosts the Etnacha Concert Series, produced by Israel Radio's classics station. The Etnacha performances are free. © Frommer's

MY NOTE: After all that walking through ancient Jerusalem, you'll want to relax and take in some modern Israeli culture. With your limited time on a one-day itinerary, the best place is the Jerusalem Theater complex. Located in the leafy upscale residential neighborhood of Talbieh, the theater hosts a pleasant cafe where you can find a varied menu of fish, pasta and salads and live background music. After dinner, browse the gallery space where you'll find art or sculpture by local artists. At the box office, choose from any number of live music, theater or dance performances at one of the three auditoriums-or maybe you'll just want to round out your Jerusalem day by taking in an Israeli movie (most have English subtitles) at the intimate cinema in the building.



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Jerusalem Snapshot

Local Info

From the sky, Jerusalem is a mass of white stone dwellings, spread over hilltops, with the walled Old City as a center point. Despite the city's buildings all being made from the same stone, (this is according to a planning law), the diversity from area to area is huge, with each neighborhood being its own little world. Within a matter of kilometers you can switch from the history and intensity of the Old City, to the cosmopolitan buzz of downtown, from the hubbub of a souk to the peacefulness of a panoramic look-out point, from hearing Arabic on Salah Al-Din Street to Hebrew in Malha Mall, from the religiosity of Mea Shearim to the dance club culture of Talpiot.

Old City

The walled Old City is the center of Jerusalem(but sometimes feels like the center of the world), with Jewish West Jerusalem on its one side and Arab East Jerusalem on its other. It's a wonderful place to get lost in by day and to marvel at its fairytale-like beauty when it is floodlit at night. A walk around the Ramparts Walk of the city walls is recommended to get a feel for the geography of the Old City, which is composed of several different areas: the Muslim, Christian, Armenian, and Jewish Quarters as well as the highly contested Temple Mount. These quarters within the Old City can be divided into East Jerusalem and West Jerusalem.

East Jerusalem

The Temple Mount is the location where it is said that Abraham prepared to sacrifice his son. Later, the First and Second Temples were built on this site, and it is believed that this is also the location from where the Islamic prophet Mohammed went to heaven. The gleaming gold-topped Dome of the Rock mosque, which dominates the Jerusalem skyline, stands in this compound as does Al-Agsa Mosque.

The only remaining wall of the Temple provides the border between the Temple Mount and Jewish Quarter. This is the Western(Wailing) Wall and Judaism's most

holy site, where worshippers pray verbally and stick written prayers into the cracks between the ancient bricks. The Jewish quarter also contains numerous religious institutions, museums and archaeological sites, such as the Cardo, an ancient Roman thoroughfare.

Another must-see area is West Jerusalem's Mea Shearim, which is inhabited by strictly Orthodox Jews living a life devoted to the Torah and dressing in the same way they have been doing for the last hundred years. Visitors should walk around this area with respect- in modest dress, without a camera, and refraining from public displays of affection.

The adjacent areas of Nahlaot and Mahane Yehuda Market are fascinating to walk through during the day- a bustling market and a pedestrianized residential area with the sound of song floating down alleyways and the poor and the gentrified living side by side in this old part of town.

Bordering the other side of the Temple Mount is the Muslim Quarter, which is rich in architecture from the Mamluk period(1250-1516). Its souks, which wind through countless alleys, are a treat for the senses, where you can experience the scent of Turkish coffee, the cries of the market sellers and interesting merchandise ranging from hair ribbons to chicken legs to feast your eyes on.

For people watching in East Jerusalem, the Damascus Gate area and Salah Al-Din Street are a hive of activity with vendors selling produce along the roadside and service taxis coming and going from Palestinian areas all over the country.

West Jerusalem

The differences in language, sights, and sounds between East and West Jerusalem will make you think you have arrived in a new country. Jaffa Gate is the entrance to the Armenian Quarter and Christian Quarters. On your way in, you will pass the Tower of David Museum. The Armenian Quarter is home to some 1000 Armenian residents, and much of the life of this

community goes on behind the high walls of the Armenian Compound.

Within the Christian Quarter is the Holy Sepulchre where Jesus is said to have been crucified. Many pilgrims follow Jesus' last footsteps to this church along the 500 meter(one third mile) Via Dolorosa, (which is best approached from Lion's Gate). The Lutheran Church of the Redeemer and the Ethiopian Compound are also in this quarter.

Outside the Old City

One kilometer outside the walls of the ancient city(exit from Lion's Gate), more religious sites and wonderful views can be taken in from atop the Mount of Olives, home to the spectacular St Mary Magdalene, with its golden rooftop, the Chapel of the Ascension where they say Jesus rose to heaven and the Tomb of the Virgin Mary.

For fun, try the Russian Compund at night(West Jerusalem's bar area) and the touristy Ben Yehuda Street, Zion Square and surrounding alleyways, which have a lively mix of cafes, restaurants and specialty stores.

To get a feel for what hip locals like to do at night, go to the German Colony's Emek Refaim Street- a strip of eateries a couple of kilometers South of the Old City, with outdoor tables and specialty stores or the industrial zone of Talpiot(a few kilometers further south along the same road), which houses some of the city's dance clubs.

History

Jerusalem is a city rich in history. King David ruled it 3000 years ago, Jesus walked in its streets 2000 years ago and over half a century ago it became the capital of modern Israel. Jerusalem's history has been a tumultuous and bloody one. Over the centuries, the Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Crusaders, Mamluks, Ottomans and British all fought



for her, ruled over her, and eventually lost

One of the best ways to get a grip on the dizzying change of rulers in Jerusalem is to visit the Time Elevator, a simulated ride through the city's history, narrated byFiddler on the Roof star, Chaim Topol. This is a fun introduction for children and those wanting a framework for further understanding Jerusalem's past.

But history is all around you in the layers of Jerusalem, which go deep, with ruins from different time periods lodged on top of each other. Excavations in the City of David(the oldest part of the city, which dates back to 1800 BCE) have revealed 25 strata of settlement.

Of course, Jerusalem is an archaeologist's paradise. Relics discovered before 1948 are housed in the Rockerfeller Museum, and those excavated post-1948 are housed in the Israel Museum's Samuel Bronfman Archaeology Wing, which has rooms dealing with prehistory, the Canaanites, Israelites, the Second Temple period, the Romans and Byzantines.

The story of Jerusalem as a capital begins in 1000 BCE when King David proclaimed it capital of the Kingdom of Israel and his son, Solomon, built the first Temple. In 701 BCE, when the city came under siege from the Assyrians, King Hezekiah built an underground tunnel so that the city's water supply would not be cut off. Visitors can still walk through this dark tunnel, which is knee-deep in water and runs between Gihon Spring and the Pool of Siloam.

In 586 BCE the Babylonians conquered the city, destroyed the Temple, and drove its population into exile. Some 47 years later, the Persians captured the city, allowed the exiles to return and a Second Temple was built. In 322 BCE, the Greeks took the city, until a Jewish rebellion in 164 BCE put the Hasmoneans in charge. In 63 BCE came the Romans and the rule of King Herod. It was at this time that Jesus was born. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the Christian Quarter of the Old City marks the supposed site of Jesus' burial and resurrection place, and this is considered to

be the world's most holy Christian shrine. In the year 70, the Romans destroyed the Second Temple. Only one of its outer walls remained intact, and this is the Western(or wailing) Wall, the most sacred Jewish site in the world.

The Roman period lasted until 326 when the Byzantines came. The Cardo, the main thoroughfare of Roman Jerusalem(called Aelia Capitolina), still remains today.

The Byzantine period came to an end with an Arab takeover in 638. The Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque were built, and this complex became the third most holy Muslim site after Mecca and Medina. According to Islamic tradition, Al-Aqsa is the spot where Muhammed tied his winged horse before ascending to heaven.

In 1099, the Crusades began and a Christian kingdom was established. Jews were burnt alive, and Muslims were either slaughtered or expelled. In 1187, Saladin took the city, allowing the exiles to return and Christians to stay. This saw the beginning of the Old City's division into four distinct quarters.

In 1254, the Turks came and slaughtered most of the Christians, then in 1260 came the Mamluks. Much of the architecture in today's Muslim Quarter stems back to the Mamluk Period.

In 1517, the city was taken by the Ottomans, who built the city walls in their current form. Because Jerusalem was an outpost of the Turkish Empire, it got neglected and by the mid-1800s the great powers of Europe were rediscovering the Holy Land and establishing their presence.

During this period, foreigners started to build outside the city walls, creating neighborhoods such as the Russian Compound, the German Colony, Mea Shearim, and Yemin Moshe.

In 1917, the British captured Jerusalem and made it the capital of the British Mandate in Palestine. In May 1948, Britain pulled out, and a war erupted between the Jews and the Arabs. This resulted in West Jerusalem being under siege. Jews were forced out of the Old City and lost their rights to pray

there. The Jewish Quarter of the Old City was destroyed. The city became divided with Israel having sovereignty over West Jerusalem(its capital), while Jordan was in control of the Old City and East Jerusalem.

The situation changed during the Six-Day War in 1967, when in response to attacks from King Hussein of Jordan on Jewish Jerusalem, the Israelis advanced and took the Old City and East Jerusalem. The destroyed Jewish Quarter was rebuilt post-1967.

Today the debate and conflict over Jerusalem still continues. But as history has shown us, this is nothing new. The players may be different, but the theme is the same- the quest for control over this beautiful and sacred city.

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Hotel Insights

Jerusalem has been hosting pilgrims and visitors for centuries. Today, just as in days past, visitors come from every corner of the world to experience the special atmosphere of a city that's holy to the majority of the world's population.

Amongst the 63 hotels scattered throughout the city, you'll find everything from the iconic and priceyKing David Hotel to the simplicity and quiet of the guest house operated by the sisters of Notre Dame in picturesque Ein Kerem--and a host of chain and boutique hotels in-between.

Jerusalem's hotels are just about evenly divided between the predominantly Jewish western side of Jerusalem and Arab eastern Jerusalem. Most of the Arabowned hotels are on the eastern side, but a number of the chain hotels and Jewishowned boutique hotels are also close to the Old City, where the majority of religious sites are located.

In and Around the Old City

Inside the walls of the Old City is an array of small, budget-price hostelries. Some, like theSt. Mark's Lutheran Hostel are run by various Christian religious groups and are the place to meet fellow travelers and soak in the atmosphere of the alleys of the Old City. Other commercial hostels like the venerablePetra Hotel and Hostel offer similar style accommodations in 19th-



century buildings in and around the bustling Jaffa Gate. A bonus is the awe-inspiring view over the nearby rooftops, steeples and domes of the Old City. For more Old City ambience, try one of the small, independently-run hotels like the Gloria where you'll find modest, but comfortable rooms and friendly service. (None of these hotels are kosher.)

Close by, but outside the wall is the supermodern, deluxeMamilla Hotel with the very latest in amenities plus a trendy Mirror Bar and Rooftop Restaurant. A few hundred yards up the street is the cheap but welllocatedYMCA Three Arches Hotel, which shares space with the Jerusalem YMCA, built by the same architect who designed the Empire State Building.

Other options within walking distance of the Old City include the basic, clean and modernEldan Hotel, the luxuryDavid's Citadel and the modestBeit Shmuel Guest House. The Mount Zion Hotel is a great choice if you're looking for 4-star accommodations in an authentic Ottomanstyle atmosphere. Rooms and public areas look out over Mt Zion and the walls of the Old City and the entire hotel is decorated in rich Middle Eastern style.(All these hotels are kosher.)

Further Afield

A cluster of new glatt kosher hotels catering mostly to groups is located north of Damascus Gate, across from the Meah Shearim neighborhood. They include theOlive Tree and theMoriah Classic.These are a good bet if you'll be attending a conference at Hebrew University Mount Scopus or Hadassah Hospital Mount Scopus branch.

On the other side of town, close to the Convention Center, Central Bus Station and Government Compound is the Crowne Plaza that hosts Jerusalem's best Indian restaurant and boasts some great views from the upper floors.

Downtown Jerusalem

In and around central Jerusalem, where more and more of the area is going to pedestrian-only streets lined with cafes, boutiques and gift shops, there are plenty of hotel options too. The Montefiore, tucked away on a quiet side street is a solid 3-star hotel with an outstanding kosher restaurant attached. On weekends The Leonardo

Plaza is a favorite of religious visitors, who enjoy the 10 minute stroll to the Old City as well as its proximity to the Ben Yehuda Street Pedestrian Mall.

Other Options

Hotels and hostels aren't the only places to stay in Jerusalem. There's an active bed and breakfast scene in many neighborhoods of the city too, for those looking for a taste of local life. Check out BedandBreakfast.com for some options. © NileGuide

Restaurants Insights

Israel's plentiful range of home-grown fruits and vegetables means that Jerusalem has wonderful salads, fresh juices, and vegetarian dishes to offer. Menus draw heavily on local ingredients such as pine nuts, eggplant, mint, chickpeas, tomato, cucumber, avocados, figs, and Bulgarian cheese(Israel's answer to feta).

West Jerusalem

Vegetarians will find Jerusalem an easy city to eat out in, thanks to Jewish dietary laws that do not allow milk and meat dishes to be served in the same restaurant. Look out for Kosher dairy restaurants, which will have no meat on their menu, such as Yerushalayim haKatana, but might serve fish, and the juice bars that line the roads and alleys of the downtown area. For pure vegetarian food try the canteen style Village Green in the center of town.

Jerusalem has an eclectic range of food to offer due to its standing as an international city, a city on the crossroads between North Africa, the Mediterranean, and the Middle East-a city which is home to both Arab and Jewish cultures. Israel's Jewish immigrants come from all corners of the globe, leading to a lively culinary mix. Jewish food is more than smoked salmon bagels(available at the Holy Bagel) and chopped liver. It ismalouweh from Yemen(a deep fried dough served with tomato relish), spicy couscous stews from Morocco, on the menu at Darna, as well as the chicken matzo-ball soup and gefilte fish of Eastern Europe, served by places such as Marvad Haksamim in the Hechal

Shlomo synagogue. At ILS130 a head, the King David is probably the priciest option.

The city's favorite snacks arefalafel(deep fried balls made from crushed chick peas) andshwarma(slices of lamb) - both of which are served in pita bread along with hummus, tehina, salads, chips, pickles and spicy sauce. In West Jerusalem, head to the alleys of the Mahane Yehuda market for a cheap and authentic falafel experience.

Things happen late in Israel, and many restaurants do not get busy until 9p or later. The biggest concentration of eateries in West Jerusalem is in the pedestrians' area around Zion Square and Ben Yehuda Street, including the charming alleyways of Nahalat Shiva and Yoel Solomon. As this is a popular tourist area there are cuisines here from all around the world: bagel stands, creperies, South American steakhouses such as Pampas or El Gaucho, and Far Eastern food, be it sushi at Sakura or kimchee at Korea House, to name a few.

During Shabbat(just before sundown on Friday to the appearance of the first three stars on Saturday night) many eateries in West Jerusalem will be closed. However, non-Kosher establishments are open as well as the plethora of restaurants in East Jerusalem and the Old City(bar the Jewish Quarter), so you won't go hungry.

East Jerusalem

Sahlab is a delicious Arab drink made from the roots of orchids, which is served warm with a nutmeg and shredded coconut topping. Another popular local delicacy is theboureka – puff pastry with a savory filling, such as mashed potato. spinach, mushrooms, or white cheese. The Arabesque Restaurant is the place to go to get all of the traditional Middle Eastern cuisine as well as selections from various countries all over Central and Eastern Europe. Val's Brasserie Lounge is located in the American Colony Hotel and offers a relaxing experience and dishes from around the world.

Many Arab eateries, such as Pasha's, will provide anargillah(water pipe with flavored



tobacco) for relaxing after a meal. Israel is known for its light, healthy breakfasts and a visit to a breakfast buffet at a five-star hotel is recommended. The staples of an Israeli breakfast are a large range of cheeses and salad vegetables. In keeping with five-star tradition, there will also be omelets, crepes, smoked salmon, cheesecake, and fresh fruit. Guests can help themselves as many times as they like, and lunch afterwards is rarely necessary!

Old City

Inside the Old City, there are many places to grab a takeaway falafel or shwarma. Some other options for eating in this area are the charming Armenia Taverna or the more casual Bagel Bite. Also in the Old City is the always delicious and gourmet Michael Andrew. Abu Shakri in the Arab quarter provides good Middle Eastern foodfor those wishing to eat their falafel sitting down. Trylabana, a white cheese, andfoul a bean dish seasoned with lemon juice. (C)

Nightlife Insights

As the capital of the modern state of Israel as well as a meeting point of so many Middle East cultures, Jerusalem offers a sophisticated nightlife scene.

While not as brash as the Tel Aviv scene, Jerusalem has its own brand of club culture, but most of Jerusalem's nightlife focuses on the cultural side of things. Open-air concerts, films, street festivals and theater are where most Jerusalemites spend their evenings, along with a heavy dose of cafe culture and people-watching.

Strolling along the downtown pedestrian Ben Yehuda Street and Mamilla malls and along lively Emek Refaim Street are other favorite ways to pass an evening.

For a comprehensive calendar of events in English, check out the Friday edition of the Jerusalem Post or Haaretz-International Herald Tribune.

Music and Performance

TheJerusalem Theater complex, with its three auditoriums, spacious lobby and wide outside plaza hosts a mind-boggling variety of concerts, dance and theater performances all through the year.

The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra uses the 4,000-seat International Convention Center for their regular concerts. For a more intimate experience, try the wine and jazz evenings at the Ticho House or the world music series at the Confederation House, overlooking the walls of the Old

In the early summer, look for the Sounding Jerusalem series--two weeks of free classical chamber concerts in a variety of venues in and around the Old City, as well as the exquisite classical concerts on Saturday evenings in the Crusader-period courtyard of the Church of the Redeemer in the Christian Quarter.

The vibrant club scene in the commercial district of Talpiot, south of downtown, has expanded to include a number of venues in the Train Station compound, such as the trendy Colony, a popular bar/restaurant hang-out for journalists, UN personnel and government officials. A few hundred yards away, HaMa'abada offers up innovative performance space and a mixed-age crowd.

Don't show up anyplace too early in the evening--the Jerusalem scene doesn't get underway until around midnight.

Movies

Jerusalem is a great movie town. As the home of the Cinematheque, an art-house complex of cinemas that also houses Israel's official film archive. Jerusalem holds its own with a string of film festivals; two cinemas at the Jerusalem Theater andSmadar, an independent film house and cafe in the German Colony.(Smadar is one of the relatively few places open on Friday night.) Mainstream releases show up at the multi-plex housed in the International Convention Center.

Arts Festivals

Jerusalem's mayor is heavily invested in making Jerusalem a cultural capital, and the number of cultural festivals that go on all through the year is making that happen. Whether it's the Hutzot Hayotzer International Arts& Crafts Fair; the Israel Festival in May that brings performers from all over the world to Jerusalem, or the Houses from Within extravaganza in the fall that allows the curious to visit every kind of interesting house in Jerusalem, Jerusalem at night is an exciting place to be.

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Things to Do Insights

The wonderful thing about Jerusalem is the many worlds it encapsulates and the hustle and bustle of human life going on in different places. This city is a people watching paradise, and seeing its various neighborhoods on foot can take a few hours, (including falafel and coffee stops). It's always fun to get lost a little because by wandering down alleys of new neighborhoods, you will experience the flavors and atmosphere of Jerusalem for vourself.

Mahane Yehuda Market

Begin this tour at the Mahane Yehuda Market. There are several avenues to walk up and down(some inside, some outdoors). The produce is both fresh and cheap, making it a good place to pick up fruit, vegetables, pita bread, and pastries. It is a treat for the senses, with vendors talking loudly in Hebrew and Arabic and the crowds jostling with each other. Here you can pick up the cheapest falafel in West Jerusalem as well as many other tasty local treats. Next, head on to the Jaffa Gate, which also has its own tourist information center. This gate is a crossroads of sort, leading to various areas of the Old City, including the Christian Quarter. To continue this tour of West Jerusalem, move on to visit the Knesset Building, Israel's modern Parliament. Also in the area and of more historical and religious interest, pay a visit to the Greek Orthodox Monastery of the Holy Cross, where it is rumored that the wood for Christ's cross was grown, and a bit farther out, King David's Tomb, which is not the biblical leader's actual resting place, but nonetheless a synagogue full of interesting features.

The Dome of the Rock

One of Jerusalem's most distinguishing features is this, the Dome of the Rock. located on the Temple Mount. This dome, part of the Al-Aqsa Mosque, is one of the most important religious sites in the world for several religions. This is the site where Abraham almost sacrificed his son. Isaac, and also the site of the Prophet Mohammed's ascension to heaven. In addition to the dome and the mosque, also located on the temple mount is the Islamic Museum. Located just beyond the Temple



Mount is the Damascus Gate, the well known entrance to the Arab Quarter. For a little refueling after all this religiosity, stop in to the charming and closeby Armenian Taverna for delicious specialties.

The Jewish Quarter

Jerusalem's Old City has many diverse neighborhoods, one of which is the ancient Jewish Quarter. Although this area was largely destroyed during Israel's War of Independence, it has now been mostly rebuilt and restored. On one edge of the Jewish Quarter, you will find one of Judaism's most important sites, the Western Wall, also known as the "Wailing Wall." This wall is the only surviving piece of the Second Temple, which was destroyed in 70 CE by the Romans. Today, Jews come here to pray and place written prayers within the wall's niches. Also located at the Western Wall plaza is the Western Wall Tunnel, which is the underground areas that were once street level, a sort of ancient subterranean Jerusalem. Tours of the tunnel must be arranged in advance. One museum of interest located here in the Jewish Quarter is the Wohl Museum of Archaeology, another underground historical site. The museum contains excavated houses. Of other archaeological interest is the nearby Burnt House, an excavated dwelling from the Second Temple period. After all this touring, stop into the casual Bagel Bite for something to nosh on.

The Mount of Olives

On the eastern edge of the city, right outside the Temple Mount, lies the Mount of Olives, a significant location for both Jews and Christians. The top is one of the best panoramic views of the city you will find. Located at the foot of the mount, you will come across the Tomb of the Virgin Mary, where the heavenly matriarch is said to have fallen into an eternal sleep and ascended to heaven. Here you can also visit the tombs of Mary's parents, Anna and Joachim. Another site of interest located on the mount is the Chapel of the Ascension. which contains the supposed spot from which Jesus ascended to heaven. Finally, yet another chapel to visit on the Mount of Olives is Dominus Flevit, a more modern Roman Catholic chapel, with a beautiful view of Jerusalem. Once you're ready to descend from the mount, stop in the

East Jerusalem's Pasha's for a delectable Lebanese dining experience.

Guided Tours:

Jerusalem Circular Line Egged bus no. 99(+972 530 4962/ http://egged.co.il)

Walking Tours:

Zion Walking Tours(+972 2 627 7588/ http://zionwt.dsites1.co.il/HTMLs/Home.aspx)

Travel Tips

As of September 2010, getting around Jerusalem can be a little harrowing. Many of the central downtown streets are in various stages of devastation due to the construction of the light rail project that is years behind schedule and now slated to go into operation in November 2011. Because the streets are all torn up, bus routes and bus stops change from day to day. Best thing to do is to call the Egged bus company info hotline*2800 from any phone to ask how to get to your destination today.

Cabs are reasonably priced--about \$7-10 for an in-town ride of 15-20 mins. Most cabbies speak some English. No tips expected. Many streets in central Jerusalem are designated for cabs and buses only, making them a speedy way of getting to your destination.

If you do take the plunge and hop on a bus, NileGuideHow To Get Around Jerusalem gives you some basic how-tos.

Important Destinations and their bus routes:

Central Bus Station: Bus#1,8,74,75,7,

Haas Promenade: 8 Biblical Zoo: 26 Ein Kerem: 17

German Colony: 18,21,4

26,28,18,21,31,32,9,13.

Givat Ram Camous: 31,32,71,72

Hadassah Hospital: 19 Hebrew U, Mt Scopus: 28,4

Israel Museum: 9, 17 Jerusalem Theater: 13

Malha Mall: 6 Rachel's Tomb: 163 Yad Vashem: 20, 13 Western Wall: 38, 1, 2 Sightseeing Bus: Route 99 All-City Circle Route

Jerusalem's All City Circle Route--Jerusalem's special Red Double-Decker Tourist Bus leaves five times daily from in front of Safra Square on Jaffa Road. Sunday to Thursday, starting at 9am. It stops at 25 major sites throughout the city. and is a great way to sit back and get a feel for Jerusalem. Audio explanations of the route and sites are available in eight languages. The fare for the all-city circle route(approx. 2 hr.; no getting off the bus) is NIS 60(\$14/£5.60). All Day Passes, allowing multiple stop offs, is NIS 80(\$20/£10.10), but you have to coordinate reentering the bus with the route schedule. Tickets can be bought at many hotels(your hotel can also make a reservation for you); for further information, call Egged:*2800 from any phone inside Israel.

Walking:

Jerusalem is definitely a walking town. In and around the Old City, that's the only way to get around. Just pay attention at pedestrian crossings--do not assume that drivers will stop for you. Don't even think about crossing against a light--jay-walking fines are steep and tourists who feign ignorance don't always get away with a warning.

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Fun Facts

- 1. Interesting fact: The Via Dolorosa commemorates the journey of Jesus through the city of Jerusalem. Five of the 14 stations of the cross are actually found inside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.
- 2. Fun Fact: There are two(non-working) windmills in Jerusalem.
- 3. Random fact: Jerusalem has 776,000 residents. The Jerusalem Theater sells 600,000 tickets to its cultural events every year.
- 4. Weird fact: You can see houses made out of tin in the central Jerusalem neighborhood of Nachlaot. They were built in the early 20th-century when building materials were scarce.
- 5: Interesting fact: The Mount of Olives cemetery is the oldest continually used cemetery in the world.



- 6. Fun fact: In 1962, dinosaur tracks were discovered at Moshav Beit Zayit on the outskirts of Jerusalem. Archaeologists have since uncovered 200 dinosaur prints in the area.
- 7. Random fact: The Jerusalem YMCA and the Empire State Building were both designed by the same architect, Arthur Lewis Harman.
- 8. Interesting fact: If you know your Bible and a bit of history, you'll find it easy to get around Jerusalem--street names are grouped in one neighborhood by
- names of the 12 tribes(Dan, Gad, Shimon etc) in another area by medieval Jewish scholars(Ramban, Ben Maimon, Ibn Givrol, Alfassi etc) and in yet another neighborhood by events related to Israel's War of Independence(Hagdud Haivri, Palmach, HaMapilim etc)
- 9. Weird fact: In the Old City you can find an institute dedicated to making everything necessary for the rebuilding of the Temple. (The Temple Institute)
- 10. Random fact: Jerusalem's Old City has eight gates. The most significant of them, the Golden Gate orShaar Harachamim in Hebrew(built around 648), has been sealed

- since the 16th century. It's the gate in the eastern wall through which Jews believe the Messiah will enter Jerusalem.
- 11. Interesting fact: Where else in the world would you find a synagogue and a Catholic chapel sharing a building? On Hillel Street in central Jerusalem, the Italian Synagogue is one floor up from a beautiful German Catholic chapel built in the 1860s.
- 12. Random fact: There's a replica of Philadelphia's Liberty Bell in a park in the tony Talbieh area of Jerusalem.
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