

The Holy Land and Rome

13 days itinerary



St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City



Jerusalem



Nazareth



Gethsemane

ITINERARY

DAY 1 USA - TEL AVIV Depart in the evening on a transatlantic flight to Tel Aviv via Rome.

DAY 2 TEL AVIV Arrive Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport in the evening. Meeting and transfer to the hotel in Tel Aviv area for overnight.

DAY 3 CAESAREA, HAIFA, MT CARMEL Drive to Caesarea, once the capital of the Roman Province, and see Roman and Crusader remains, and the harbour from which St. Paul was taken prisoner to Rome. Drive on to Haifa and have a panoramic view from Mount Carmel of the port, River Kishon, the Mediterranean and the attractive city. Time for mass at Mt Carmel. Continue to the shores of the Sea of Galilee to stay in our hotel for three nights.

DAY 4 CANA, NAZARETH First, we'll visit Cana, scene of Jesus' first miracle turning water into wine. Visit the Church of the Wedding. Continue onto Nazareth and visit the Church of Annunciation with Mary's Well. Continue to the Nazareth Village. This is an excavated village dating from around 1 AD. The excavations have been carefully renovated with a synagogue and houses. Local people will give practical demonstrations to give us a unique insight into village life and agriculture, as it would have been at the time of Jesus.

DAY 5 SEA OF GALILEE, BOAT RIDE, CAPERNAUM, TABGHA, BEATITUDES, JORDAN RIVER Take the boat from Tiberias to Capernaum; there you will see an ancient synagogue and St. Peter's house which was later converted into a church. Time for mass. Also by the shore you will visit Tabgha with the Church of Peter's Primacy and the ancient mosaic of the Loaves and Fishes. Time for fish lunch on your own. Continue to the Mount of Beatitudes where the Sermon on the Mount is remembered. Then to the Jordan River for the traditional baptismal site of Jesus. Finally to your hotel for overnight.

DAY 6 MT TABOR, JERICHO, QUMRAN, DEAD SEA, BETHANY, JERUSALEM Leave Tiberias and visit Mt Tabor, site of the Transfiguration and time for mass. Drive to Jericho via the Jordan Valley to see the excavations of the oldest city in the world. View the Mt of Temptations. Continue to visit Qumran where the Essene enclave was and see the caves where the Dead Sea Scrolls were hidden. Time to visit the bitter waters of the Dead Sea. Drive through the Judean hills to Bethany, home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus. See the wine press and Lazarus' Tomb. Drive up to Jerusalem for dinner and overnight.

DAY 7 BETHLEHEM Drive south to Bethlehem and see the Church of the Nativity, and below it the cave-stable of Jesus' birth. Time for mass. We will enjoy lunch in Bethlehem. After lunch we drive to the town of Beit Sahour where the Shepherd's Fields is located and inhabited by Christians for hundreds of years. Back to Jerusalem. This evening we will make a traditional solemn entry to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

DAY 8 MT OLIVES, GETHSEMANE, KIDRON VALLEY Drive to the Mount of Olives for a wonderful view of Jerusalem. See the Place of Ascension and the Pater Noster Church, and view the Palm Sunday road. At the foot of the hill see the Garden of Gethsemane with its ancient olive trees and the Church of All Nations. Time for Mass. Drive down the Kidron Valley and see the Pool of Siloam, and St. Peter in Gallicantu built over the palace of the High Priest Caiaphas.

DAY 9 OLD CITY, TEMPLE AREA, CHRISTIAN SHRINES, EMMAUS Start the day with high mass at the Tomb. Then visit the Wailing (or Western) Wall, and the Temple Area with the Al-Aksa Mosque and Dome of the Rock. See the Pool of Bethesda where the angel ruffled the water. Visit the Convent of Zion Sisters. Passing the Stations of the Cross, come to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where Jesus was crucified and buried, and then rose again. Leave the city through the bazaars to the west by Jaffa Gate. Drive to Emmaus to see the Franciscan Church and the ruins of the old town. Back to hotel for overnight.

DAY 10 TEL AVIV - ROME Morning departure to Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport to catch a flight to Rome, Italy. Upon arrival your escort will warmly greet you and welcome you to Italy. Enjoy a half day sightseeing tour of Rome. Dinner and overnight in your hotel.

DAY 11 ROME This morning we go to Vatican City to attend the weekly Papal Audience given by His Holiness Pope Francis (pending papal schedule). Following, visit the Vatican Museums, a group of most impressive edifices with hundreds of galleries filled with art treasures, including the Sistine Chapel. Later, enter the largest church in Christendom St Peter's Basilica, built on the site where St Peter was martyred. Marvel Pieta and Bernini's amazing bronze canopy. We will also visit the grave of Pope John Paul II located at the Vatican. Dinner and overnight in your hotel.

DAY 12 ROME Enjoy a tour of Rome's Basilicas which includes: the Basilica of St. Mary Major, the Holy Steps, the Basilica of St. John the Lateran, St Paul Outside the Walls, and the Appian Way -- the oldest road from Roman times-- plus the famous Domino Quo Vadis Chapel; see the ancient Baths of Caracalla, Arch of Drusus; Tomb of Cecilia Metella, and the catacombs of St Callixtus where the early Christians hid themselves to escape persecution.

DAY 13 ROME - USA Morning transfer to Rome's airport to catch our return flight home.