BLUE DIAMOND TRAVEL

The Israel Experience Planning Guide

The Israel Experience | February 13–23, 2027

Meals and Dietary Needs

Three meals per day are included and are generally served buffet or family style. Most meals are kosher, which means meat and dairy are kept separate. Expect fresh fruit and vegetables, breads, salads, meats, cheeses, and desserts.

Tell Blue Diamond Travel about allergies or dietary needs before departure. We will request reasonable accommodations, but cannot guarantee an allergen-free kitchen or a specific menu at every stop.

Money and Credit Cards

Israel's currency is the New Israeli Shekel, abbreviated NIS or ILS. Credit cards are widely accepted. Carry a small amount of shekels for minor purchases if you prefer, but most merchants will accept U.S. dollars.

Check your card issuer's foreign-transaction and ATM fees. Bring a backup card, keep account contact information separately, and leave unnecessary cards at home. Use bank or hotel ATMs and currency services rather than unlicensed street exchanges.

Packing

Weather can vary between Jerusalem, the Dead Sea, and the Sea of Galilee. Check the forecast shortly before departure and pack layers rather than relying on a single temperature range.

Packing Checklist

- Casual clothing, including options that cover shoulders and knees
- Light sweater or jacket and a light rain jacket or compact umbrella
- Supportive walking shoes with good traction
- Bathing suit and cover-up for the Jordan River baptism
- Hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen
- Prescription medicine in original labeled containers
- Small day bag for a Bible, water, phone, and personal items
- Passport, ETA-IL approval, and separate copies of both
- Plug adapter for Israel and a voltage converter only if your appliance requires one
- Petra Extension travelers: comfortable closed-toe shoes, an extra warm layer for the desert, and a compact overnight/day bag

Luggage and Documents

Label luggage inside and outside with your name and phone number. Keep your passport, ETA-IL approval, medicine, valuables, essential toiletries, and one change of clothes in your carry-on. Do not place travel documents in checked luggage. Lock your passport in the hotel safe when you do not need it.

Phones and Internet

Ask your carrier about international roaming, calls, and data before departure. Hotel Wi-Fi may reduce roaming costs. Keep your phone charged, use airplane mode when directed by the airline, and download

important documents for offline access. Bring a portable battery if you use your phone heavily during tour days.

Safety

Conditions in Israel can change quickly. Blue Diamond Travel monitors official guidance and local conditions and may change the itinerary when necessary. Review the current U.S. Department of State travel advisory before departure and enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program at step.state.gov.

- Stay with the group and follow instructions from the guide and driver.
- Watch for traffic, uneven pavement, steps, pickpockets, and aggressive street vendors.
- Keep valuables secure and avoid displaying large amounts of cash.
- Explore with another traveler during free time and tell the tour leader where you are going.

Gratuities

Standard gratuities for guides, drivers, airport porters, hotel bell staff, and food-service staff are included. Additional tipping never expected.

VAT Refunds

Eligible tourists may request a VAT refund for qualifying goods purchased from approved businesses. As of September 2026, the minimum qualifying purchase is 186 NIS including VAT. Ask the retailer for the required tax invoice and refund document, keep the goods and receipts available for inspection, and complete the process at the airport before checking any luggage that contains the items. Rules, thresholds, and fees may change before the trip.

Electricity and Appliances

Israel uses 230-volt, 50-hertz electricity. Most phones, tablets, laptops, and camera chargers accept 100–240 volts and need only a plug adapter, but check the label on every device. Hair dryers are available at the hotels. Do not plug a 120-volt-only appliance into an Israeli outlet without a suitable voltage converter.

Entry Requirements

Visa-exempt travelers, including U.S. citizens traveling for tourism, must obtain an approved ETA-IL through israel-entry.piba.gov.il. Blue Diamond Travel requires passports to remain valid for six months after the trip. Petra Extension travelers must also comply with Jordan’s entry and border requirements. Airline, transit-country, Israeli, and Jordanian rules may change; we will confirm the requirements again before departure.