

Things to Know Before You Go...

Israel/Jordan/Egypt

Frequently Asked Questions & Answers

Before You Travel

1. Do I need a passport?

Yes. A valid passport is required to leave the USA. It must be valid for a minimum of six months after your return date. If you do not have a passport, apply for one immediately as it normally takes 4-6 weeks. Once you have your passport, you must submit the information to our office within 105 days of departure via our website or those who do not have internet by sending a copy of the photo page of your passport). ALSO: take a copy of your passport with you when traveling.

2. How do I get a passport?

Obtain an application at your nearest passport office, courthouse, or post office. You will need a certified birth certificate (with raised seal and file number), and 2 duplicate non-glossy photographs measuring 2" x 2", taken within six months of application. For more info regarding passports you can go online to: <http://travel.state.gov>

3. Will I need a visa?

U.S. and Canadian citizens do not need a visa for Israel. Non-US citizens must contact the Israel Consulate. Visas are required for all citizens traveling to Jordan and Egypt. We will obtain a group visa once all passport information has been submitted to our office.

4. Will I need vaccinations?

None are required, but you may wish to contact your personal physician for his/her advice.

5. How soon do I need to choose a pre- or post-tour (if applicable)?

Immediately. These tours can be added, if space is available and airline tickets have not been issued, up to 105 days prior to departure. If you participate in a pre-tour without the rest of your group, you will meet up with your group at the hotel on the 1st night of basic tour.

6. What if I do not have a roommate?

While we will try to match you with a roommate, we cannot guarantee one will be available. Therefore, you should try to find a roommate and notify us of your selection no later than 105 days prior to departure. If no roommate can be found, you will receive an invoice for the single room supplement charge(s) as listed in the Fine Print under Accommodations on the brochure. This notification may come as late as 30 days prior to your departure.

7. When is final payment due?

Final payment for the trip, including optional travel protection premium if applicable, is due 105 days prior to departure. Thereafter, a late payment fee of \$100 will be assessed. Please note: once the premium has been paid, it is nonrefundable.

8. What if I need to cancel?

Call our office immediately, then submit your cancellation in writing. Refer to the information in the tour brochure regarding cancellation fees. Beginning at 105 days prior to departure, you

will be charged the single room supplement if your cancellation forces your roommate into a single room.

9. Will my tour schedule ever change?

We reserve the right to alter the sightseeing itinerary to accommodate changes in local conditions and/or circumstances. If possible, you will be notified of any changes that are made to this itinerary prior to departing the U.S.

Getting There

10. What airline will be used?

We have negotiated with several airlines, including El Al, Royal Jordanian, Luftansa, British Airways, Continental, and Delta, just to name a few.

While every effort is made to keep groups together, please note the following: If you are flying from a different departure city or have chosen an extension, you may be on a different schedule and/or even a different airline from others in your group. Once you arrive overseas you will be on the same bus with your group.

11. May I choose the airline I travel on?

Due to the volume of passengers traveling on various itineraries from many departure cities, you cannot select the airline for your travel.

12. When may I receive my flight information?

International flight information will be available approximately 30 days prior to departure; Airline tickets will be mailed with your final itinerary package approximately 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

13. May I purchase my own domestic tickets to the departure city?

Yes; however, we strongly recommend that passengers DO NOT purchase discounted tickets because of unforeseen schedule changes that may result in high cancellation fees. All flight times are subject to change without advance notice. Airlines have been known to change flight times by five or more hours, or cancel flights completely.

14. May I purchase my own international tickets?

Yes; but remember, airport / hotel / airport transfers are not provided to passengers who have purchased their own international flights. If you are a "ground only" passenger, you will meet the group at the first hotel and leave the group at the last hotel.

You will be responsible for making your own travel arrangements to/from the international airports.

15. Who is responsible for any airline schedule changes and/or expenses?

All flight times are subject to change by the airlines without advance notice. we are not responsible for changes and/or delays in airline schedules, nor the expenses associated with such changes.

NOTE: Due to increased security at the airports we recommend arriving at least two hours prior to departure for domestic flights. Arrive at the departure airport at least three hours prior to departure for international flights. (whenever possible)

16. What if I miss my flight, or it is canceled, on the day of departure?

Contact our office immediately so we can inform our overseas office. The airline's responsibility is to get you to your destination as quickly as possible. Be sure to call our office with your new arrival information so we can meet you at the arrival airport.

NOTE: Our emergency line is answered 24 hours a day; 7 days a week. Refer to your flight letter for emergency phone number information. Listen carefully for the emergency instructions given in the recording.

17. May I request special seating and/or meals on the flights?

Yes, requests should be submitted in writing no later than 105 days prior to departure. We cannot, however, guarantee your request can or will be honored by the airline.

We regret that we cannot process Frequent Flyer requests for you. If you desire to claim Frequent Flier Miles on your trip, we suggest they be requested upon check-in.

18. Will my group travel together on the same airline?

Every effort will be made to keep groups together; however, depending upon your itinerary, the size of the group, and the availability of seats on the same flights, some groups may be on several different domestic and/or international flights. Once at your hotel, you will be on the same bus during the entire program.

19. Will a company representative be available at the airports?

Our personnel will meet groups upon arrival at your final destination, and will help with return departures to the US. In most cases, there will not be a representative at US airports.

20. Will all flights go through New York/JFK?

No. Groups can depart from several of the major international departure gateways throughout the US.

21 How much luggage am I allowed to bring?

Due to limited space available on buses for luggage, only ONE suitcase (limited to approximately 44 lbs) and one carry-on bag per person is allowed. Garment bags are not allowed.

NOTE: Carry-on must fit under seat or in overhead compartment of the plane and under the seat or in your lap while on the bus. *Porters do not handle your carry-on luggage.* Most airlines will accept 62 maximum linear inches (length + width + depth) for check luggage. Your final itinerary package will include a luggage tag to be placed on your checked luggage. We strongly recommend you also include your own luggage tag on your checked and carry-on luggage.

Upon Arrival

22. What if my luggage is lost or damaged?

File a claim at the airport before you leave the baggage claim area. It will be the airline's responsibility to get lost luggage to you or compensate you for damaged luggage. We will do our best to follow-up with the airline but the responsibility ultimately rests with the airline. We strongly suggest that you pack at least one change of clothes in your carry-on bag.

23. What to expect upon arrival at the airport!

You will be met by our representative just outside the baggage claim area. Collect your luggage and follow the instructions from our representative. Luggage carts may be free or available for an extra charge.

24. What is the difference in our time zones?

Israel, Jordan and Egypt are seven hours ahead of US Eastern Standard time.

25. How long will it take to travel from the airport to the hotel?

The transfer time can vary. Hotel rooms will be available by mid afternoon.

26. What are the hotel rooms like?

Hotel rooms are First Class or better. Each room will have a private bath, TV, and phone.

27. Are hair dryers available in the hotels?

Some but not all hotels have hair dryers.

28. What meals are included in my journey?

Breakfast and dinner are included daily. Lunches only included when specified. Coffee or tea are served at breakfast but beverages at dinner will be at a supplemental charge.

29. How long is the typical sightseeing day?

On some days, you will depart the hotel between 8:00-9:00AM and return in the late afternoon around 5:00-6:00PM. Your guide will announce the sightseeing schedule.

30. What are the buses like?

The deluxe touring motor coaches are air conditioned, and will accommodate approximately 45 passengers.

31. Are there rest rooms on the buses?

In Israel the buses do not have restrooms but sufficient stops will be made for the comfort of our passengers. Egypt and Jordan buses do have restrooms.

General Information

32. How much money should I bring?

This is a personal decision. NOT included in your tour cost are: Optional Tours (which are **paid in cash** directly to your guide), shopping and lunches. A love offering will be collected for your guide and driver by the Bus Captain. The suggested amount is \$4 per person, per day for the guide, and \$2.50 per person, per day for the driver. Taking a minimum of \$500 dollars in cash is recommended.

33. What type of currency is used?

Shekels in Israel, Pounds in Egypt, Dinars in Jordan, however, US currency is widely accepted. We suggest to take a good supply of small bills - 1's, 5's..

34. Should I exchange some money before departure?

This is not necessary, but you may feel more comfortable having some local currency before arriving.

35. Will the company, or hotel, provide money exchanging services?

All exchanges will need to take place in the airport or at a local bank. Hotels may exchange money into local currency, but may charge a high fee for doing so.

36. Will ATM machines be available?

ATMs are available at local banks. The money you receive will be in the local currency.

37. What about travelers checks and credit cards?

We do not recommend the use of travelers checks as you may experience difficulty using and/or cashing them. In addition, banks usually charge a significant handling fee when cashing travelers checks. Credit cards can be used for most purchases.

38. Will US currency be accepted for extra expenses?

Yes, generally US currency is accepted for small purchases.

39. Will I be able to shop while on tour?

Time will be allotted for shopping. While some will feel that too much time is spent for shopping, others will think it is not enough. Remember that ours is not a shopping tour. Also, any purchases made are at your own risk. We are not responsible for your dissatisfaction with any items purchased. Guides are not authorized by EOT to recommend any store or shop.

40. What are the US Customs regulations?

A returning US resident is allowed \$800 in purchases duty free. Gifts may be mailed to the US duty free, but are limited to \$100 per person, per day.

41. What is VAT?

VAT (Value Added Tax) is a sales tax that is charged for most goods in Israel, Jordan and Egypt. This amount is part of the price - not added on at the cash register. VAT in Israel, Egypt and Jordan is at least 17%. It is possible for you to claim back most of this tax for Israel. The best way to do this is to see if the retailer you are buying from is affiliated with "Tax Free" shopping. If so, they will give you the instructions for your refund. Generally, all you have to do is collect a completed form from

the store which lists your purchases. You **MUST** have the form stamped by customs when you leave the country. Look for the **TAX FREE SHOPPING** symbol.

42. What about "love offering" for our guides and drivers?

Our suggested amount for the voluntary love offering is \$4.00 per person, per day for your guide and \$2.50 per person, per day for your driver. Your Bus Captain will pass an envelope for this collection towards the end of your trip.

43. What about other "tips"?

Prepaid gratuities have been collected for the following persons: hotel dining room staff, bell man/porters, housekeeping. You will not need to tip for standard services as all tips will be distributed by our company. If, however, you request any special services from the staff, additional gratuities would be appropriate.

44. What will the weather be like?

While there is no way to predict the weather, we can offer the following averages:

Spring: 62°F Fall: 75°F
Summer: 77°F Winter: 52°F

45. What type of clothes should I bring?

Layer clothing as the mornings and evenings may be cool. Bring a lined raincoat, a small umbrella, and a hat to protect you from both the rain and sun. For touring, wear loose, comfortable cottons or other lightweight clothing that can be layered. Some of the tours involve long bus rides and/or considerable walking, so comfort is essential. Comfortable shoes are a must!

NOTE: At some holy sites, men and women must have their knees and shoulders covered. Please check with your guide for any clothing restrictions for the following day.

46. Should I bring my prescription medicines?

Bring your medicine in the original bottle. Also bring a copy of the generic names for each. If you have medications which need to be refrigerated, you must inform our office at least 105 days prior to departure so we can make the appropriate arrangements with the airlines and hotels.

47. I have limited mobility. What special facilities are available?

Due to the lack of handicapped accessible facilities, persons needing wheelchairs or ambulatory assistance will find travel on this program quite difficult and many sites will be inaccessible.

48. What about travel protection coverage?

If you have purchased the travel protection plan listed on the brochure, medical and trip cancellation coverage, etc., is provided. It is important to remember, however, that all medical bills and other services must be paid for at the time service is rendered. Upon your return to the US, a claim will then need to be filed directly with the **travel protection provider**. Please review the protection plan that has been included in your pre-tour literature.

49. What if I lose something on the tour?

Leave valuables, including items of sentimental value, at home! Double check your belongings before leaving the plane, hotels and buses. We cannot assume responsibility for lost items.

50. I've heard a lot about prepaid phone cards. – What's your advice?

If you decide to purchase phone cards here or overseas, remember to acquire one that has an access code for each country you will be visiting. Make sure your card is for international use. Please note that in some cases

an additional fee may be charged for using the card from your hotel room. Also, not all hotels have public phones that accept phone cards. If you intend to use a cell phone during your trip, check with your local provider for International Service capabilities and fees.

51. Have any lectures or religious services been planned?

Refer to your specific tour brochure for this information.

52. Is there any free-time during the tour?

Each day is quite full with sightseeing but you can notify your guide if you wish to miss a day of touring (itinerary permitting).

53. Any last minute items I shouldn't forget?

Passport, airline ticket, sunglasses, rain gear, your camera (and extra memory card and batteries) and sundry toiletry items are musts. You will also want to bring cash or credit card, another form of I.D. and any medication needed for the trip.

54. Any other tips?

Yes, here are a couple–

- 1) be on time for the bus and be prepared to rotate seats on bus
- 2) settle personal charges the night before checking out of hotel
- 3) notify your tour leader, Bus Captain or guide if you will not be on the bus for sightseeing
- 4) no smoking allowed in dining room, on bus, or in lecture hall
- 5) remember you are a guest in another country. Customs and food will be different than at home.