

# BEST OF ISRAEL

with Pastor Joe Butta

September 17 - 26, 2024



P.O. Box 6378 • Lakeland, FL 33807  
Office: 1-800-929-4684, option 2 • Fax: (863) 647-4411  
Email: [nts@travelwithus.com](mailto:nts@travelwithus.com)  
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### September 17 & 18 – USA to the Holy Land

Your pilgrimage begins as you depart the USA on an overnight flight. You will be welcomed at the Tel Aviv airport by our representative and transferred to your hotel to enjoy dinner before retiring for the night.

### September 19 – The Galilee

Worship as you sail across the Sea of Galilee. Visit Capernaum, the center of Jesus' ministry in the Galilee, and visit the synagogue built on the site where Jesus taught (Matthew 4:13, 23). On the Mount of Beatitudes, contemplate the "Sermon on the Mount" (Matthew 5-7). Explore the Church of the Loaves and Fish at Tabgha, the traditional site of the feeding of the 5,000 (Luke 9:10-17). Enjoy a fish lunch as though you've joined Peter and Jesus on shore. See the Chapel of the Primacy, where Peter professed his devotion three times to the risen Christ (John 21). Recall Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist at the Jordan River.

### September 20 – Cana, Nazareth, Tel Megiddo & Caesarea

Visit the Franciscan Wedding Chapel in Cana, the site of Jesus' first miracle, before continuing on to Nazareth, Jesus' boyhood home (Matthew 2:23). Look out over Tel Megiddo (Armageddon) to view one of the most important archaeological sites in Israel. Today's last stop is Caesarea, a center of the early Christians where an angel visited Cornelius, the first Gentile believer (Acts 10), and where Paul was imprisoned for two years before appealing to Caesar.

### September 21 – Bet Shean, Jericho, & Qumran

Start the day in Bet Shean, a city continuously inhabited for over 5,000 years. The uncovered ruins date back to the Greek/Roman city that was part of the Decapolis of Jesus' day. See colonnaded streets with marble sidewalks, Roman public baths, and a theater. As you stop in Jericho to view the ruins of the city conquered by Joshua (Joshua 6:1, 2, 20), in the distance, you can also see the traditional site of the Temptation of Jesus (Matthew 4:1-11). Continue to Qumran, where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in 1947.

### September 22 – Bethlehem & Jerusalem

In Bethlehem, visit the cave revered as Jesus' birthplace and see the Church of the Nativity constructed over the site (Matthew 1:18-25). Gaze out over Shepherds' Field before returning to Jerusalem. Explore the poignant exhibits of Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust Memorial.

### September 23 – Jerusalem & the Old City

Begin your day with a group picture taken from the Mount of Olives, where Jesus ascended into heaven (Acts 1:9-12). Walk the Palm Sunday Road and pray in the Garden of Gethsemane and envision the scenes of the night before Jesus' crucifixion (Matthew 26:36-44). Continue to Mount Zion to visit the House of the High Priest Caiaphas, where Jesus was questioned the night of His betrayal (Matthew 26:57). Meditate on the events of the Last Supper as you visit the traditional location of the Upper Room (Mark 14:12-26). After lunch, wander through

the excavations of the City of David. Explore Hezekiah's Tunnel, an amazing engineering feat that was dug from either end and met in the middle (Note: Those who are claustrophobic may want to meet the group at the other end of the tunnel). Visit the Pool of Siloam, recently uncovered at the foot of the city.

### September 24 – Masada

Visit Masada and the Dead Sea (additional charge). Ascend by cable car to Masada, Herod's legendary mountaintop fortress, which became the last desperate stronghold of the Jewish Zealots against the Romans. You can still look down on the remains of the Roman camps and the siege ramp below. End your day with a dip in the salt and mineral-laden waters of the Dead Sea.

### September 25 – Jerusalem

Explore ancient Jerusalem at the Teaching Steps and the Western Wall. View the Pool of Bethesda, where Jesus performed the Sabbath miracle (John 5:1-18). Sing a hymn in the Church of St. Anne and experience its rich acoustics. Visit Herod's Antonia Fortress, where Jesus appeared before Pontius Pilate (Luke 23:1), and follow in Christ's steps on the Via Dolorosa ("the Way of the Cross"). At the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, take time to reflect on His sacrificial love. Visit the Garden Tomb for a time of reflection and communion.

### September 26 – Return to the USA

*This itinerary is subject to change in sequence of days, local conditions and preferences of the tour leader.*

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**First Deposit Due Upon Registration**

**Second Deposit Due - June 4, 2024**

**Full Payment Due - July 4, 2024**

## EXTENSION OPTION 1



**GREECE &  
GREEK ISLES CRUISE**  
Sept. 26 - Oct. 1, 2024 • \$1,545\*

### September 26 - Arrive in Athens

Discover the rich architectural splendor of the ancient city of Athens as you explore the world-renowned Acropolis, the Propylaea, the Parthenon and the Erechtheum. Stand on Mars Hill as the apostle Paul did when he proclaimed, "I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." Also, view the House of Parliament, the Presidential Palace, and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Check into your Athens hotel for dinner and overnight rest. (Some of these sites may be included on your return to Athens.)

### September 27 - Board the Celestyal Cruise Ship & Mykonos

Nestled in the heart of Greece's Cyclades archipelago, Mykonos pulses with irrepressible energy. With its powder white houses and sparkling blue waters, the Island of the Winds is as colorful as the people who call the island home. You can walk narrow marble pathways laced with purple bougainvillea blooms or go cycling on two wheels past off-the-path Ano Mera village. Explore Greece's maritime history at Armenistis Lighthouse and check out the Folklore Museum's Mykonian ship models. *Shore excursions today will be booked directly through the cruise line.*

### September 28 - Kusadasi & Patmos

Ephesus is one of the Seven Churches of Revelation and was once a bustling port town with wide, colonnade-bordered streets and a population of 250,000. Spectacular excavations have revealed much of the glory of ancient Ephesus, including the huge agora and library, but much has been lost. The ancient world once declared the Temple of Artemis to be one of the Seven Wonders of the World but today, only a single column remains to mark its site. View the terrace houses, also known as "the houses of the rich," which give a true impression of the ancient lifestyle. Explore Patmos, where the Apostle John was exiled and later received the Revelation of Jesus Christ as he recorded the final book of our New Testament. (Today's Shore Excursions are included)

### September 29 - Crete & Santorini

Delve into a Cretan cultural experience that includes sightseeing at Lake Kournas, the Arkadi Monastery and the bustling town of Rethymnon. See Lake Kournas, where you can savor a delicious treat of traditional cheese pie with honey among white sands and ancient olive trees. Explore the fortress-like monastery, whose history dates to Byzantine times. Finish with a stroll through distinctively ancient yet distinctly modern Rethymnon. Next stop, dock in Santorini, one of the most beautiful of the Greek islands, where picturesque, whitewashed villages topped with brilliant blue domes stand in stark contrast to the sheer drop cliffs overlooking the Aegean Sea. The island itself perches on the edges of a volcano whose eruption 3,500 years ago is thought to have led to the collapse of the Minoan civilization. Explore the island on your own or join one of the optional excursions available for purchase onboard. *Shore excursions today will be booked directly through the cruise line.*

### September 30 - Athens & Corinth

Today, tour the city of Corinth, where the Apostle Paul met fellow tentmakers Aquila and Priscilla and received a vision from the Lord saying, "I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city". As Paul spoke, Crispus (chief ruler of the synagogue) and many others believed and were baptized, establishing the church at Corinth to whom Paul later wrote his two epistles. Discover the archaeological museum, marketplace and temples. As you walk among the ruins, stand on the Bema, where the apostle Paul stood before Gallio to face charges brought against him by the Jews. Return to Athens for dinner and overnight.

### October 1 - Return to the USA or Continue with the Italy add-on.

*NOTE: Airfare or airport transfers are not included in the selling price.*

## EXTENSION OPTION 2



**ITALY**  
Oct. 1 - 9, 2024 • \$3,735\*

Extension option 2 includes everything listed in  
Extension Option 1 PLUS

### October 1 – Arrive in Rome

Your assistant will greet you at the airport and escort you to the hotel in Rome. Check into your accommodations. The rest of the day is at leisure. Stay overnight in Rome. Lunch and dinner are not included.

### October 2 – Rome

After breakfast at the hotel, a local guide will escort you to Ancient Rome. You can tour two of the most important sites, the Colosseum and the Roman Forum. Afterward, transfer back to your hotel. You will have free time after lunch. In the afternoon, take a walking tour, which includes Baroque Rome, the Spanish Steps, the Trevi Fountain, and Navona Square. Head back to your hotel after the tour. Lunch and dinner are not included.

### October 3 – Rome, Pompeii, Amalfi Coast & Sorrento

After breakfast at your hotel, you will check out. You will take a private mini-bus to the south of Italy. Here, you will stop in Pompeii and walk through the ancient ruins with your guide. After visiting Pompeii, your tour will continue to Amalfi, with a photo stop in Positano along the way. There will be a stop for lunch on the way to Amalfi. At the end of the day, you will travel to Sorrento, where you will stay overnight at your hotel. Lunch and dinner are not included.

### October 4 – Sorrento, Capri & Naples

Have breakfast at your hotel before checking out. Depart on your private mini-bus to the port. Once you arrive, meet your guide, catch the hydrofoil, and head to the island of Capri. During this trip, you'll have the opportunity to discover Capri and Anacapri. After lunch, return to the port, where you will catch the hydrofoil to Naples. Lunch and dinner are not included.

*OPTIONAL: If time and weather permit, you can take a boat tour of the famous Blue Grotto.*

### October 5 – Naples, Palermo & Cefalù

Check out of your hotel after breakfast. Head to the airport in Naples to depart for Palermo. Once you arrive in Palermo, meet your driver and travel to Cefalù. There, you will renew your vows at the Cathedral of Cefalù. This celebration will be organized by your tour host. The rest of the day will be at your leisure. Stay overnight in Cefalù. Lunch and dinner are not included.

### October 6 – Cefalù

Breakfast will be at your hotel, followed by a free day to relax, shop, or do other activities of your choice. Stay overnight in Cefalù. Lunch and dinner are not included.

### October 7 – Cefalù, Enna & Calascibetta

Check out of the hotel after breakfast. Depart from Cefalù and head to Calascibetta, which is two hours away. After an enjoyable visit at Calascibetta, check into your hotel in Enna. Spend the rest of your day at leisure. Lunch and dinner are not included.

### October 8 – Mount Etna, Riposto & Taormina

After breakfast, visit Mount Etna. Afterward, continue to Riposto. In the afternoon, drive to Taormina. At the end of the day, check into your hotel in Taormina/Acireale. Lunch and dinner are not included.

### October 9 – Taormina, Catania, Rome, New York

After breakfast and check out, depart for the airport in Catania. You'll catch your flight to Rome, then fly from Rome to New York City.

Guests taking an extension may be on a different flight than their group and/or traveling companion.

A minimum number of participants must be reached to operate extensions. Contact us for specifics.

\*A 3.5% surcharge will be added to all credit card transactions

