



## PACKING TIPS

Before heading out on a trip to the Holy Land, here are our tips on packing! As a rule, dress in Israel is extremely informal: casual for daytime, informal for evenings. Bring lightweight clothing in the warmer months, and layers for the winter weather, i.e., sweaters, jackets with zip-out linings, a rain poncho or raincoat to keep warm and dry.

Modest attire for visits to religious sites is required (no sleeveless tops nor short-shorts for the ladies); some sites require head coverings for the ladies.

Wear comfortable walking shoes (break them in before you come to Israel) and bring swimwear for a dip in the Dead Sea and any other swimming you may enjoy. In Jerusalem or other hilly areas, a light jacket is recommended, even during the spring/summer.



If you require special medications, we suggest that you bring them along with you in their original prescription containers and pack them in your carry-on luggage. Keep a list of your medications and dosages with you as well. Not all brands of medicine are available overseas should you need to refill your prescriptions.

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## WEATHER IN ISRAEL

Before your trip, it's important to learn about the weather in Israel so you can pack accordingly. Israel has four seasons and several different climates.

- COAST: Humid summers and mild winters
- ELEVATIONS: Dry summers and moderately cooler-to-cold winters
- JORDAN VALLEY: Hot, dry summers and pleasant winters
- NEGEV: desert conditions exist all year round



**SUMMER** – average temperatures during the day range from 83 degrees Fahrenheit in Jerusalem to over 100 degrees in the Dead Sea region. At night, temperatures rarely dip below the mid 60s.

**WINTER** – average temperatures during the day range from 54 degrees in Jerusalem to 69 degrees in the Dead Sea region with oftentimes intermittent rain followed by periods of sun. At night, temperatures can drop below 40 degrees. On rare occasions when it snows in Jerusalem, schools close and it becomes a day of snow-filled joy for all, mainly for the kids!

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## SAFETY IN ISRAEL



**Israel is a safe place to visit and tourists feel completely secure visiting the country.** With Israel Advantage Tours, your safety in Israel is one of our top priorities.

According to the State Department, “Personal safety conditions in major metropolitan areas, including Tel Aviv and Haifa and their surrounding regions, are comparable to or better than those in other major global cities.” In fact, you are far more likely to encounter trouble in any major U.S. city than anywhere in Israel.

Armed security guards are stationed at many establishments in Israel for your safety. They may inspect your bags or use a metal detector upon entry. In Israel, the military also serves alongside the local police.

Israelis uphold a longstanding tradition of extending a warm welcome toward their tourists. This is why many visitors rank Israel so highly as a safe and worthwhile travel destination. This accounts for the ongoing increase in tourism to Israel during recent years.

Israel Advantage Tours is dedicated to ensuring your complete safety at all times. Our ground operators in Israel are constantly monitoring conditions for the safety of our passengers.

**Your safety and security are our foremost priorities.**

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## USING YOUR CELL PHONE

Before departing for your tour, contact your cell phone provider to find out the rates you will be charged when visiting another country. Many providers have international phone and data plans.

Unless the proper arrangements are made, international phone use can be quite expensive, and you do not want to return home to an unexpected higher-than-anticipated bill. Great care should be used with regard to cellular data (email, web, etc.). Data usage on your cell phone can add up quickly and become very expensive.

Cell phones can also be rented from an assortment of companies offering a variety of overseas rental programs.



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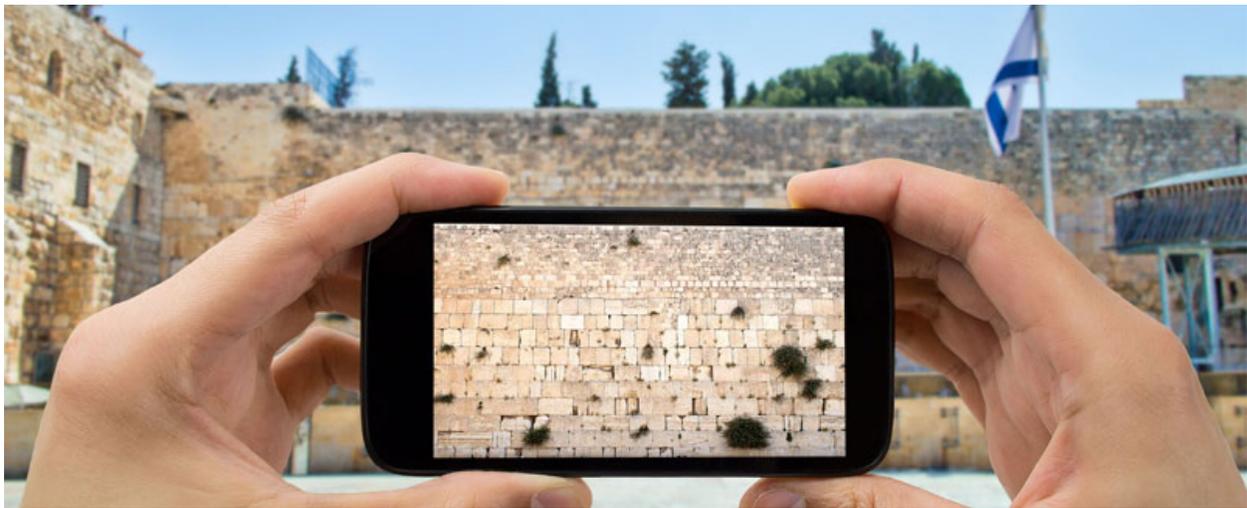


## HELP WITH ELECTRONICS

Electricity in Israel is 220-volt AC, while in the US it is 110-volt AC. Most modern devices can function on either system. However, adapters are required. Check your electronic devices to be sure they are rated 110v/220v.

Camera film and memory cards are available, but they are twice the cost in Israel. Be sure to bring your charging devices and extra batteries. We suggest you ensure your equipment is working properly before departure. Also make sure to pack your camera, smartphone, iPads, laptops, and other valuable equipment in your carry-on and not your checked luggage.

Traveling with cell phones, iPads, laptops, etc. is easy, as long as you bring the necessary chargers and adapters. Many hotels provide hair blow dryers.



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## MONEY AND CREDIT CARDS

The unit of currency is the New Israeli Shekel (NIS), usually referred to as “shekels,” and comes in a variety of denominations. Each shekel consists of 100 agorot.

Currency exchange rates fluctuate, so be sure to check exchange rates. Money should be exchanged only at banks, a currency exchange center, or by the hotel cashier. Most hotels, businesses, and restaurants honor all major credit cards.



Before leaving home, contact your credit card company to notify them that you are traveling overseas and plan to use your credit card. This will alert your credit card company to expect charges being made from Israel. Make a copy of the front and back of your credit cards and keep it with you, in case your cards get lost; this way you'll have your account number and credit card emergency phone number to call while you're overseas.

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## TIPS ON TIPPING



Tipping practices for service providers are standard in Israel, just as they are at home. Some restaurants add the service charge to the bill. If not, a tip is expected. Ten percent is typically the minimum; feel comfortable tipping more for exceptional service.

Tips for meals and portage are typically included in the price of your tour. Unless otherwise directed by the Tour Leader, please note that it is customary for each passenger to tip the tour guide, vehicle driver, hotel staff, and other service providers.

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## VALUE-ADDED TAX

Value-Added Tax (VAT) is a tax that all Israeli consumers pay. It is a flat rate percentage of each sale or purchase that is included in the price of goods and services, imposed by the country as a source of income. As of 01/01/2016, the Israeli VAT rate is 17 percent.



To encourage tourism in Israel, tourists having purchased certain goods during their visit are entitled to a VAT refund when they depart Israel. When purchasing your items, ask the store clerk to complete and stamp the special VAT Refund form you must present at the VAT counter at the airport prior to boarding your flight. Receipts must also be presented with the unused/unworn goods to the clerks at one of the designated VAT Refund counters. Items must be in their original packaging. The refund will be returned in the unit of currency requested. *Conditions do apply.*

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