



JCC Association  
of North America

JCC Association  
Center for Israel Engagement

JUNE 24–JULY 2, 2026



# ISRAEL: RESILIENCE & RENEWAL

## JCC Movement Leadership Experience

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### LOGISTICS AND AMENITIES

#### Q: What are the program dates?

A: The JCC Movement Leadership Experience in Israel will begin at 12 p.m. on Wednesday, June 24, 2026, at Ben Gurion Airport and end on the morning of Thursday, July 2, 2026, in Jerusalem. We will arrange to meet up with those people arriving before June 24, so the whole group can travel to Haifa together.

#### Q: How do I register?

A: Register [here](#).

The initial registration requires a \$500 deposit that is fully refundable up to March 1, 2026. After March 1, 2026, \$425 of the deposit will be refunded, and after May 1, 2026, the deposit is non-refundable. Full payment must be made by May 1, 2026 and JCC Association will send you an invoice for payment in advance of that date.

We strongly recommend you purchase travel insurance (see the information below) in case of unforeseen cancellations.

#### Q: What is the cost of the program?

A: The cost for single occupancy is \$6,999 USD.

The cost per person for double occupancy is \$5,390 USD. (price for two people sharing a room is \$10,780 USD)

Individuals who wish to share a room should list their roommate's name on the registration form. JCC Association cannot arrange for or guarantee roommates, in which case travelers will be responsible for the cost of single occupancy.

#### Q: What does the cost include?

A: The price includes these accommodations:

- Two nights at the [Dan Carmel Hotel](#) in Haifa
- Four nights at the [Carlton Hotel](#) in Tel Aviv
- Two nights at the [Inbal Hotel](#) in Jerusalem

On most days, the program will include "half board"—breakfast at the hotel and either lunch or dinner. Specific details will be included in the program itinerary.

The program will cover expenses for activities, speakers, admission fees, and gratuities for the tour educator and bus driver. Health insurance up to the age of 65 years (for those over 65 years of age, there is an additional cost) Also included will be attendance at the Maccabiah Games VIP gala and opening ceremony in Jerusalem.

#### Q: Are there extra fees for Israeli citizens?

Yes. Anyone with Israeli citizenship, regardless of where they reside, is required by law to pay an additional VAT (value added tax), currently 18%, when staying at hotels in Israel. This tax will be added to your final invoice at the end of the program and will be listed as "extra" on the bill.

### **Q: Are room upgrades available?**

A: Yes, upgrades are available, based on availability. Hotel upgrades and their prices are listed in the [registration form](#). The earlier you request an upgrade, the better the chance of securing a preferred room. Room upgrades will incur additional costs that will be added to your final invoice.

### **Q: Do I need a visa to travel to Israel?**

A: First, it is important to confirm that your passport is valid for at least six months from the date you will arrive in Israel. If your passport expires within six months, please start the renewal process today. Airlines will deny you boarding if your passport is not valid for at least six months after your arrival date. As of August 2024, travelers to Israel must have either a valid visa or ETA-IL approval *before starting their journey*. U.S. and Canadian citizens are eligible to [apply for ETA-IL approval](#). The cost is approximately \$7 USD and can be paid online. Applicants cannot save and return to the online application, so be sure to have all the information on hand before you begin:

- A valid email address
- A valid passport, including its number and issue and expiration dates
- Travel information, including arrival date, approximate length of stay, and reason for travel, which is “tourist”
- Personal information, including place and date of birth, marital status, additional nationalities, parents’ names, contact information, and dates of any previous visits to Israel

Passports of American and Canadian citizens who obtain ETA-IL approval will be stamped with a permit upon arrival in Israel.

Citizens of all other countries (except Israel) can [determine their eligibility for ETA-IL approval](#), and if they are not eligible, must apply for a visa. Consult with the [Israeli Consulate nearest you](#) to see what additional documents, if any, are required.

Citizens of Israel do not need a visa or ETA-IL approval. They will be asked to present their Israeli passport upon arrival in the country.

For more information, [contact your local Israeli consulate](#) to coordinate your visit and ensure a smooth arrival and departure from Israel.

### **Q: Is JCC Association arranging group flights to and from Israel?**

A: No. Because people are coming from different locations and have various airline preferences, we ask you to make your own flight arrangements and send them to us when finalized. We are happy to suggest travel agents who can assist you. Please [email us](#) if you wish to confirm that flights suggested by your travel agent will work for the program, and we will be happy to advise.

### **Q: Is it possible to arrive earlier or stay beyond the dates of the program?**

A: Yes, of course. Please make your own reservation for additional nights directly with the hotels or through a third-party booking site such as booking.com.

### **Q: Is VIP assistance available at the airport, including transportation to the hotel?**

A: Yes. [Laufer Group](#) and [Aero VIP](#) offer VIP assistance for arrivals and departures. You can book directly with either VIP service and choose to include taxi transfer to hotel and other amenities.

### **Q: What is the exchange rate and how much money should I bring with me?**

A: There will be some time to shop for souvenirs and gifts, and you may want an extra drink at meals. As of this writing (January 2026), the exchange rate is about 3.2 NIS to one U.S. dollar, but this rate may change by July 2026. Gratuities for the tour educator and bus driver as well as tips at group meals will be included in the trip cost. The itinerary includes some meals on your own, and these will be personal, out-of-pocket expenses. Using a charge card or credit card is an easy way to get the day’s best exchange rate. Google Pay and Apple Pay are other options widely available in Israel.

### **Q: What about travel insurance?**

A: We highly recommend you purchase comprehensive travel insurance (including “cancel for any reason”) for this trip to protect against cancellation, lost luggage, stolen items, etc. or to receive reimbursement for canceled flights. Generally speaking, insurance must be purchased immediately after making payment for your flight or land costs.

### **Q: Is the medical insurance you provide comprehensive?**

A: The basic medical insurance provides only primary care and hospitalization, if required. It does not cover pre-existing conditions, dental care, eyeglasses, pregnancy, or drug abuse. Participants over the age of 65 will be required to pay for an additional supplement for their health insurance. If you plan to extend your stay in Israel beyond the program dates (June 24–July 2, 2026), consider also extending your health insurance coverage. You can add a request for extended dates to your registration form.

### **Q: Are all meals provided, and will they be kosher?**

A: On most days, the program will include “half board”—breakfast at the hotel and either lunch or dinner, leaving opportunities to enjoy meals on your own, with friends, etc. The program itinerary will indicate clearly which are group meals and which meals are on your own. All meals provided by the program will be kosher.

### **Q: Can meals provided by the program accommodate special dietary needs and/or food allergies?**

A: Please be sure to note any special dietary needs and/or allergies on your registration form. We will coordinate with all hotels and restaurants and do our best to accommodate special needs and food allergies, but we cannot make any guarantees on behalf of our meal-providing partners.

### **Q: What is the expected weather?**

A: During the summer months, Israel is hot with no rain. Tel Aviv and Haifa will be hot and fairly humid, and Jerusalem hot and dry. Jerusalem evenings may be pleasantly cool. Our bus transportation includes air conditioning as do most restaurants and indoor sites. However, we will be outside quite a bit, so plan to pack good sunscreen and a hat, and drink lots of water.

### **Q: Can you give me advice on how to prepare for the trip?**

A: Prior to the program, we will share information, readings, and other useful resources to help you make the most of this experience. In the meantime, this [participant booklet](#) includes general information about packing, electrical appliances, currency exchange, credit cards, cellular plans, and other useful details for your trip.

### **Q: Is this the right trip for me if I have limited ability to walk?**

A: Although there is no hiking planned for this program, there will be some walks that are optional. In addition, there will be some walking involved (up to a mile or so) and quite a bit of getting on and off the bus.

### **Q: How can I plan to attend the Maccabiah Games as a spectator?**

A: The Maccabiah Games competitions will be held based on individual sports at sites throughout Israel. For example, swimming competitions will take place at the Wingate Institute near Netanya. Please check [here](#) for details about the schedule. And check the [Maccabiah website](#) closer to the Games. You will need to make your own arrangements for transportation, entry to the Games, and accommodations to attend specific competitions.

## **PROGRAM**

Program subject to change.

### **Q: What is the planned itinerary?**

A: Here is the [link](#) to the current draft itinerary. Please note that there may be changes as we finalize speakers and visits.

### **Q: My spouse/partner is a JCC Association board member, but I am not. Will there be elements in the program that will suit me?**

A: Yes, absolutely. All JCC Association trips are tailored to appeal to diverse audiences and include content appropriate for participants from varied backgrounds. We do ask that spouses and partners participate fully in all aspects of the program.

### **Q: I have been to Israel many times. What will make this experience special?**

A: Every visit to Israel is different based on the people you travel with, the program’s focus, and the personalities you meet. This experience comes two-and-a-half years after October 7 and will provide an important opportunity to explore Israel’s renewal, growth and resilience. We will look at how the relationship between Israel, and the Diaspora has developed and share thoughts about how our JCCs can be more connected with today’s Israel and all its wonders and complexities. We will meet fascinating individuals who will share their stories and their understanding of Israel as well as give us valuable insights into the country and its people.

### **Q: I traveled to Israel soon after October 7. In what ways will this program be a different experience?**

A: This is not a solidarity mission, and we will not visit the places you may have previously visited, such as the site of the Nova Music Festival. When we travel south, we will focus on the rebuilding and the resilience of the people and places in the Gaza envelope. We also will spend time in the north of Israel to understand the affect the war has had on the country after two years. Together with our partners at Maccabi World Union, we will end our program at the opening of the Maccabiah Games, a huge celebration of Jewish peoplehood.

### **Q: I have never been to Israel. Will I get to visit popular sites?**

A: Yes, we will visit a few of the most popular sites in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. However, if you are a first-timer to Israel, you may want to consider extending your visit to include traditional and popular tourist sites such as Masada and the Dead Sea; Yad Vashem; and others. We are happy to suggest tour guides with whom you can plan an extension.

**Q: Will I have time to see family and friends?**

A: Although our program will be full and busy, there will be time available to meet up with family and friends or just spend time with other people in the group. The final itinerary will clearly note the free time, so you can plan time with family and friends or just relax.

**Q: I am a bit anxious about the free time.**

A: Free time is included to give participants time on their own or to meet up with family and friends. However, there are always people from the group and staff to spend time with, so you need not be alone unless you want to be!

**Q: I see that Shabbat lunch is not included in the program. Can I have lunch at the hotel?**

A: Certainly, Shabbat lunch is available at the hotel. It is at an additional cost of \$110 per person.

**Q: Where can I find out more information about the Maccabia Competition Schedule?**

A: please check [here](#) for details about the schedule. Please note that JCC Association is not responsible for the schedule or any changes, and we recommend you stay updated through the [Maccabiah website](#).

**Q: What else should I know about the program?**

A: We anticipate that the program will be a wonderful combination of learning and fun and a great opportunity to spend time with people who care about the JCC in their community. Our journey also will afford time to learn together, share experiences, and collaborate on new ideas. You should expect an intense 10 days during which we will be going from morning to evening with meetings, site visits, and discussions. We will be on our feet quite a lot, so be sure to pack comfortable shoes.

**Still have questions?**

Please reach out to Leah Garber at [l.garber@jcca.org](mailto:l.garber@jcca.org).

*Jan 12, 2026*

*Information subject to change*