

## JERUSALEM ASHDOD ISRAEL

Though the city's name dates to antiquity and is rich in history, today's Ashdod is actually a very modern port city. In fact, Ashdod was well planned, beginning in 1953, from the sand up. This is a hard working city; an industrial and commercial base, one of the most important in all of Israel. And the 200,000 (+) people of Ashdod, most arriving after 1990, are justly proud of the city they have built.

Ashdod is a vital maritime gateway to historic cities and sites throughout Israel. Up the coast about 20 miles (32km) to the north is the bright, bustling, beachfront metropolis of Tel Aviv and the ancient port of Jaffa. Approximately fifty miles (90 km) southeast of Ashdod is the Dead Sea and the imposing redoubt of Masada. Heading north from Masada visitors will come to Bethlehem and just beyond, the incredible city of Jerusalem.

Jerusalem (Yerushaláyim) is the capital of the State of Israel. About 45 miles (70 km) to the east of Ashdod, the city is known for its beauty and for being the focal point of the Jewish, Christian and Islamic faiths. The city has a population close to 800,000 – 20% of which are Israelis of Arab descent. There are three basic sections to Jerusalem; the historic Old City, East Jerusalem and the New City. The walled Old City, as it has for centuries, continues to draw religious pilgrims and tourists from around the world. In the Old City every street and stone seems to radiate historic and religious significance. The Old City is a bustling bazaar of living history. It is a densely packed labyrinth of cobblestone lanes and alleys with thousands of shops and shopkeepers.

Modern Jerusalem is the home of the State of Israel's three branches of government. Visitors to the New City will find countless restaurants and cafés, some of Israel's leading museums and the homes of the world famous Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra and the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. Perhaps the most poignant site in modern Jerusalem is Yad Vashem, the National Authority for the Remembrance of the Martyrs and Heroes of the Holocaust.



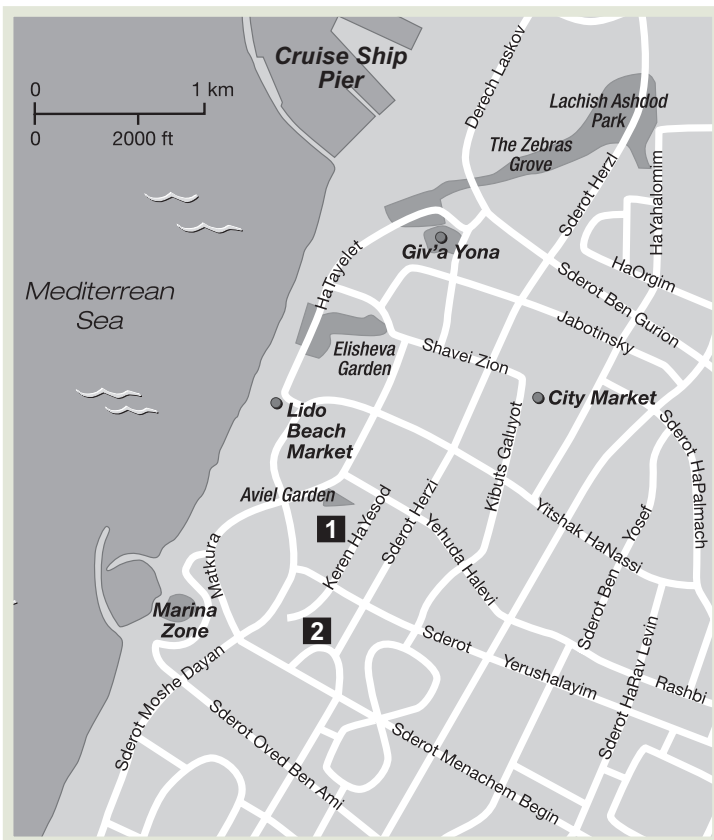
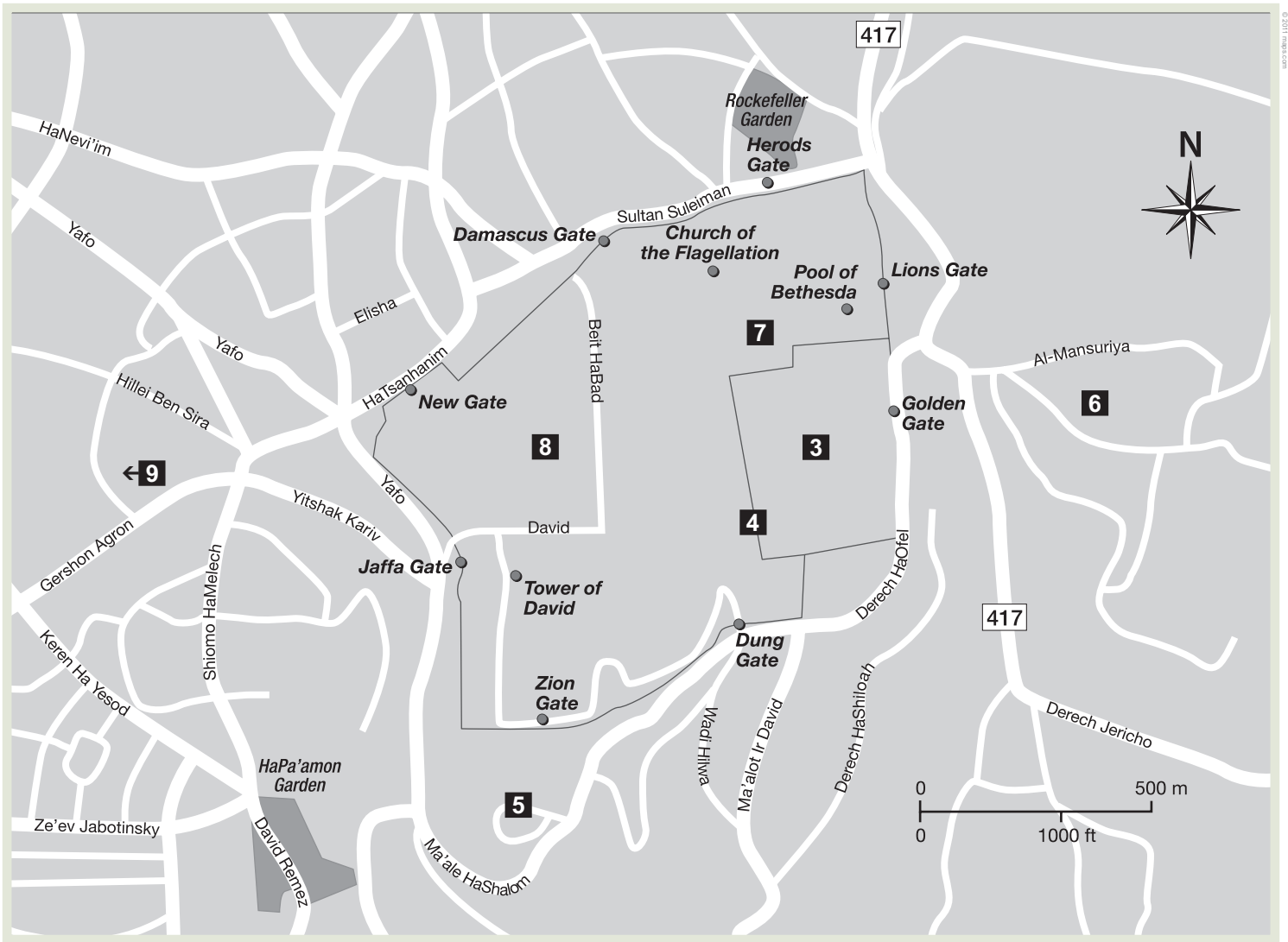
### HISTORY

To some people the Old City is little more than the historic center of modern Jerusalem. To others it is simply the center and capital of the modern State of Israel. However, to many people, throughout Israel and beyond, the Old City of Jerusalem is the center of this world and the world yet to come.

This is the city of King Melchizedek and his blessing upon the patriarch Abraham nearly 4,000 years ago. This is the city where a young shepherd boy grew up to reign as a great king. This is the city where another king cherished wisdom more than wealth and the Lord bestowed both upon him. This is the city where a temple of indescribable majesty stood for centuries only to be destroyed and eventually rebuilt again.

Jerusalem has been conquered, pillaged, plundered, restored and conquered again and again. This is the city where a Roman ruler washed his hands and sent the son of a carpenter to be crucified. This is the city where the same Romans destroyed the second temple, crushed the people and scattered them to the four corners of the earth.

Yet, despite imperial might, despite the best efforts of emperors, crusaders and kings, despite potentates and dictators, the people were not ultimately destroyed. In 1948 a nation which had not existed for nearly 2,000 years was suddenly reborn, though the city of Jerusalem remained divided. On June 7, 1967, victorious over insurmountable odds in just 6 days, Israeli army paratroopers captured Jerusalem and stood before the Western Wall; the very foundation of the Temple of their Lord. After two millennia, the blast of the ceremonial ram's horn, the "shofar", echoed once again through the streets of ancient Jerusalem.



## PLACES OF INTEREST - ASHDOD

Ashdod is a very nice city with an inviting sea-front promenade. The city also has a couple of notable museums.

**1** The **Korin Maman Museum** is located at #16 H'shayatim Street, in the Dalet Area. The museum is home to an archaeological collection ("The Philistine World") which dates back nearly 4,000 years.

**2** The **Ashdod Art Museum** is located in the Monart Center, in the center of the city. The museum is home to a collection of international and Israeli modern artists.

## PLACES OF INTEREST - JERUSALEM

**3** The **Dome of the Rock** (Masjid Qubbat As-Sakhrah) sits atop Israel's Temple Mount and dominates the skyline of Jerusalem. According to Jewish religion it is from the Temple Mount the world expanded into its present form and where God chose His Divine Presence to rest. The location is the holiest site in Judaism, where both the First and Second Jewish Temples were built and is the place Jews turn towards during prayer.

The mosque is sacred to Muslims who believe the dome covers the rock where the patriarch Abraham prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac. Islam teaches that the Prophet Mohammed went

up to heaven from this site. The Temple Mount is under the political sovereignty of Israel however daily administration is the responsibility of The Jerusalem Islamic Waqf.

**4** The **Western Wall** is revered as part of the foundation of the Temple Mount, the sole remnant of the Second Temple, erected by Herod the Great, destroyed by Rome in 70 A.D.

**5** **Mt. Zion** (according to Jewish tradition) is the site of the tomb of King David. According to Catholic tradition Mt. Zion is also the site of the Passover meal (the Last Super) held by Jesus and his disciples on the night he was betrayed and arrested.

**6** The **Garden of Gethsemane** looks out over the old city of Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. It was here Jesus wept and prayed to his heavenly father prior to his betrayal, arrest and subsequent trial.

**7** The **Via Dolorosa** (The Way of Sorrows) is, according to Roman Catholic Church tradition, the path Jesus took through Jerusalem on his way to his crucifixion on Calvary Hill.

**8** The **Church of the Holy Sepulcher** was built in the 12th century. The church is shared by several Christian denominations. According to their tradition the church was built upon the site of Christ's crucifixion, entombment and resurrection.

**9** The **Israel Museum** is located in the New City. The museum is home to the Shrine of the Book, the indescribably amazing "Dead Sea Scrolls". The museum also has a model of the Second Temple Era of Jerusalem.

### Beyond Jerusalem

**Tel Aviv** is a vibrant, thoroughly modern city while neighboring Jaffa may lay claim to being the oldest port in the world. The outdoor cafés and restaurants in Tel Aviv are countless and popular, night and day. The secular and religious cultures live in harmony side by side. Business and the beautiful beach are the city's heartbeat. Jaffa's Old City is an architectural treasure. Historic stone buildings, narrow winding alleys, the fisherman's port, an artist's quarter, quaint shops and cafés, open markets, galleries and a museum all combine to make for a wonderful visit.

**Bethlehem;** for centuries faithful pilgrims have come to this little town to visit the site they believe to be the traditional birthplace of the Christian Messiah, Jesus. Much of the Church of the Nativity which is seen today was built in 530 AD. Though the city of Bethlehem has been under Muslim control throughout many of the past centuries, through commission or omission, this Christian church has been allowed to remain standing. Today Bethlehem is administered by the Palestinian Authority and Christians continue to be welcomed to the town.

The **Dead Sea** is the lowest point on earth; famous for the high mineral content of the mud and the high salinity of the water.

The area has been a popular resort destination for thousands of years. In 1946, in cliff-side caves along the desolate shore of the sea, Bedouin shepherds made one of the most incredible discoveries in history; the famous "Dead Sea Scrolls". It is interesting to note that when the Bedouins first offered to sell a couple of the ancient scrolls to a dealer of antiquities he pronounced them "worthless" and politely declined.

**Masada** is an ancient fortress set high upon a desolate rock outcropping which overlooks the Dead Sea. Built by Herod the Great in 37 BC, a century later it was the final refuge from the mighty legions of Rome for close to 1,000 Jewish men, women and children. Masada is an eternal example of determination and sacrifice exhibited by a few Jewish families from a generation long past. Their courage is acknowledged with awe and respect unto this day and their story shall be passed down for generations of Israelis to come. "Sheynit Masada lo tipul" ... "Masada shall not fall again."

### SHORE EXCURSIONS

To make the most of your visit to Jerusalem and the surrounding area we suggest you take one of our organized Shore Excursions. For information concerning tour content and pricing, consult your Shore Excursion Order Form or contact the Shore Excursion Desk. When going ashore, be advised to take only necessary items and secure any valuables onboard.

**Local Customs** Bargaining: Vendors in open-air markets and stalls will generally bargain. Prices in stores are usually fixed.

**Tipping:** A 12% tip is appropriate if a service charge is not added to your dining tab. Taxi drivers are not customarily tipped.

### LOCAL CUISINE AND DRINK SPECIALTIES

For many gentiles, the most commonly asked question regarding Jewish cuisine is "What does Kosher mean?" The answer is relatively simple however the details and the practice of "keeping kosher" are very precise and require a good bit of dedication. The simple answer is: Kosher food is that which has been prepared under supervision and in strict compliance with traditional rabbinic interpretation of Jewish Dietary Laws. Kosher's recognized characteristic is that you do not mix meat and dairy in the same meal.

Israeli cuisine today is a combination of Mediterranean and Middle Eastern foods (olives, fish, falafel, flat breads, honey and hummus) along with the traditional recipes which hundreds of thousands of new immigrants brought to Israel following the establishment of the state (gefilte fish, schnitzel, chopped liver, borsht and the always popular chicken soup).

Tea and coffee are very popular drinks in Israel. Maccabi and Goldstar (both produced by "Tempo Beer Industries") are among the most popular beers brewed in Israel.

### SHOPPING

If you are planning to join one of the Shore Excursion guided

