

PROGRAM

Southern New Jersey Men's Mission to Israel May 4 – 11, 2025

(Draft itinerary as of March 13, 2025; subject to change)

Option: Arrive May 2 for a Shabbat in Jerusalem (Price TBD)

DAY ONE: SUNDAY, MAY 4, 2025 JERUSALEM OF GOLD

- Morning group arrival.
- Upon arrival, you will receive airport assistance, be led through all entrance procedures, and be taken to meet your Tour Educator and driver.
- Drive towards Jerusalem.
- **A State Welcome:** Take a tour of the **Knesset** (Israel's Parliament) and meet with a Knesset member to welcome you to Israel and discuss current political issues impacting Israeli society.
- Take a walking tour through Jerusalem's **Old City** and the **Jewish Quarter**. Experience the center of Jewish life, history, and holiness.
- Have lunch on your own in the Old City.
- End the day with a visit to the **Kotel**, the Western Wall.
- Check in to the hotel, unpack, and refresh.
- **Israeli People, Healing, and Rebuilding:** Enjoy your **Welcome Dinner** at *Émile Botta*. Hear firsthand insights into Israel's ongoing recovery and resilience. Learn how the **Jewish Federation of Southern New Jersey**—along with Federations across North America—has played a pivotal role in rebuilding communities and fostering solidarity, making a real difference in the lives of Israelis, and strengthening the global Jewish connection.

Overnight: Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

CONTACT US

DAY TWO: MONDAY, MAY 5, 2025

HONORING THOSE LOST AND FALLEN

- Have breakfast at the hotel.
- **Remembering Those We Could Not Protect:** Visit Yad Vashem, the national memorial to the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust, an essential emotional and educational experience.
- **Remembering Those Who Sacrificed Their Lives Protecting the State:** Visit **Mount Herzl**, Israel's national cemetery, to discuss key events in the nation's history and to honor Israel's fallen soldiers, buried side by side regardless of rank. Every morning, a memorial service is held on Mount Herzl in Israel's National Memorial Hall for Fallen Soldiers, in order to honor those who fell on that specific date. Their individual stones, engraved with their names and the date of passing, are illuminated within the walls of the hall. At the center of the hall rests the "eternal flame", a structure symbolizing our collective duty of commemoration. Participate in the daily memorial service.
- Drive to downtown Jerusalem and experience the sights, smells, and tastes of the **shuk – the Machaneh Yehudah** market including a tasting tour through the market.
- **The Fauda Experience:** A tailor-made experience set in the heart of the Old City of Jerusalem, providing an immersive look into the world of elite Israeli Intelligence and Special Forces. Former IDF commanders curate this experience and offer guests a physically, emotionally, and intellectually engaging challenge. *A//*:
- Return to the hotel with time to relax and prepare for the evening.
- Enjoy dinner at **Zanzaria**, the latest culinary gem from the renowned Machneyuda group, led by acclaimed chef Assaf Granit.
- End your day with a nightcap at the **Mamilla Mirror Bar**. With its elegant setting the Mirror Bar offers a rich variety of alcohol and wines, including classic drinks and unique cocktails. Cigar lovers can enjoy the separate and intimate Cigar Lounge supplying top leading brands from around the world. *(On your own account, not included in the price)*

Overnight: Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

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DAY THREE: TUESDAY, MAY 6, 2025

- Have breakfast at the hotel.
- **The Art of Tikkun Olam:** Volunteer and meet the elderly, often impoverished, immigrants who are finding a sense of purpose and creating beautiful artwork at **Yad LaKashish** (Lifeline for the Elderly). Hear personal stories and see the ageing artisans in action, talk with those running this inspirational organization, and check out the fabulous giftshop that supports this endeavor. A perfect time to pick up gifts for your family at home.
- Every year, over half a million dollars from JFund, the Jewish Federation of Southern New Jersey (JFSNJ)'s unrestricted donations, is allocated to the Global Connections Area of Impact, helping 70 countries overseas. Visit a program funded by JFund.
- Jeep and winery tour in the Judean Mountains.
- **Enjoy dinner** at a winery.
- Return to Jerusalem.

Overnight: Orient Hotel, Jerusalem

DAY FOUR: TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2025

THE GAZA ENVELOPE

- Have breakfast at the hotel.
- Check out of the hotel.
- Visit the **Sederot Police Station**
- Visit the **JDC Resilience Center** to understand what happened in Ofakim on 10/7 and tour the resilience center. Hear from the town's residence.
- Visit **Nir Oz**, one of the kibbutzim hit hardest by the Hamas onslaught. Meet with a kibbutz member and hear their story from that dark day.
- Lunch supporting local Western Negev businesses.
- Visit the site of the **Nova Music Festival** where a memorial has been created in the memory of those taken and killed. Meet with a festival survivor and hear their story.
- Meet with team members from **ReGrow Israel**. ReGrow was established days after the October 7th attacks by Israeli farmers, NGOs, and agricultural experts and is supported by global leaders. It is the only fund ready to act immediately to restore the damage AND grow back stronger for the future.
- Have **dinner** with Israeli soldiers.
- Drive to Tel Aviv and check in to the hotel.

Overnight: Sheraton Grand Hotel, Tel Aviv

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DAY FIVE: THURSDAY, MAY 8, 2025
THROUGH THE EYES OF THE ARMY

- Have breakfast at the hotel.
- **Israeli Security in a Post-October 7th World:** Debrief about your day in the Gaza Envelope Region with **Lt. Col. (Ret.) Jonathan Cornicus**, a seasoned military professional and public diplomacy expert with over two decades of service in the **Israel Defense Forces (IDF)** as the IDF International Spokesperson. After retiring from active duty, Cornicus became a senior fellow at the **Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD)**, focusing on Middle Eastern affairs. In this role, he continues to contribute his expertise on topics such as Arab politics, Hezbollah, Iran, and Israel's security dynamics.
- Explore the Old City of Jaffa on foot with your guide, including a stop at the flea market – **Shuk Hapishpishim**.
- Lunch on your own in Tel Aviv.
- **Become an IAF Combat Pilot for A Day!** The **Squadron's** world-class flight simulators enable you to sit in the cockpit of an F-16 fighter plane on a secret operation over Israel. After briefings from real-life retired Israeli Air Force pilots, design your mission and show off your Top Gun skills. You can fly solo or in formation with your squadron. Meet a fighter pilot who commanded control rooms during the October 7th war to get behind the scenes insight into what it felt like on that horrific day.
- Return to the hotel to relax and prepare for dinner.
- Group Dinner

Overnight: Sheraton Grand Hotel, Tel Aviv**DAY SIX: FRIDAY, MAY 9,**
2025 TEL AVIV

- Have breakfast at the hotel.
- **Start-Up Nation:** Meeting with a representative from the Israeli hi-tech industry.
- Have lunch on your own.
- Free time in Tel Aviv.
- Return to the hotel and prepare for Shabbat.
- 6:45 p.m. Shabbat Candle lighting at the hotel.
- *Optional* Shabbat services at a local synagogue.
- **Shabbat dinner** at the hotel.

Overnight: Sheraton Grand Hotel, Tel Aviv

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**DAY SEVEN: SATURDAY,
MAY 10, 2025 (NO BUS)
SHABBAT IN TEL AVIV**

- Have a late breakfast at the hotel.
- **Graffiti Tour: What's Happening in Bohemian Tel Aviv?** Explore the latest street art in urban Tel Aviv and find out what it reveals about the life, ideas, and ideology in Israel's cultural capital.
- Have lunch on your own in Tel Aviv.
- **Bring Them Home NOW! Meet families from the Hostage Family Forum**
- Visit **Hostages Square**. Stand in solidarity with the families of those still being held captive in Gaza. As you come together in hope and unity, pray for the safe and swift return of all hostages, dreaming of the day when this square will no longer be needed.
- 8:05 p.m. -- Rejoin your group for **Havdallah** to say goodbye to Shabbat and welcome a new week.
- Group Dinner

Overnight: Sheraton Grand Hotel, Tel Aviv

**DAY EIGHT: SUNDAY, MAY 11, 2025
UNITED WE STAND**

- Have breakfast at the hotel.
- **Children Are Our Future:** Meet with the team at **Sasa Setton Project** in **Sheba Hospital**. The project helps children overcome both psychological and physical challenges. Visit the learning spaces where hospitalized children participate in educational programs and the rooms where life-saving procedures take place.
- Meet with members of **The Israel Medical Simulation Center at the Wolfson Medical Center** who, thanks to the Federation funding, welcomed doctors from Southern New Jersey for unique trauma training after October 7th. We will have a briefing and an honor meeting with medical professionals involved in receiving returned hostages during the first agreement and set the guideline protocols.
- Have lunch on your own in **Sarona Market**.
- Free time.
- **L'chaim!** Enjoy your **Farewell Dinner** and a tasting tour at the **Whiskey Bar and Museum** in Sarona. The Whiskey Bar & Museum is one of the largest complexes of its kind anywhere in the world, combining a bar-restaurant and a whiskey museum in one unique location. You'll find us in Sarona's historic Templer tunnel, which was home to a local winery in the 19th century and, until a decade ago, served the covert needs of the Mossad.
- Transfer to Ben Gurion International Airport for your flights back to the U.S.

Travel safely and come back again soon!