

# ISRAEL

**Capital:** Jerusalem

**Language:** Hebrew, Arabic

**Population:** 8.5 million

**Time Zone:** EST plus 7 hours

**Currency:** New Israeli Shekel (NIS)

**Electricity:** 220V. 50Hz

## Fun Facts



- Computer software, military equipment, chemicals, and agricultural products are Israel's main exports.
- The Land of Israel was conquered by the Ottoman Empire in the 15th century, and this dominion lasted until the 20th century.
- Israel has a large IT industry and one of the world's most technologically literate populations.

While it is well known as "The Holy Land," Israel boasts many wonders and points of interest for travelers of all kinds. It is a small yet diverse Middle Eastern country with a sprawling coastline along the Mediterranean Sea and a small portion of coastline on the Red Sea at the Gulf of Eliat. Bordered by Egypt and the Gaza strip to the southwest, Jordan to the east, and Syria and Lebanon to the north, Israel is an exciting and divergent spot to visit. The three major monotheistic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—all have historical ties to the region, creating a vibrant and rich culture with both ancient and modern histories.

Although the state of Israel is a relatively new country (since 1948), its history extends back to the beginnings of human civilization. As you explore the land, you will experience a convergence of these histories, surrounded by crumbling temples and city ruins while a lively, bustling economy and progressive nation thrives around you. It is a highly urbanized and economically developed society still steeped in culture by its influential sites and historical landmarks.

In addition to its fast rising economy, Israel is a highly educated country. With only a fraction of one percent of the Middle East land mass and two percent of its population, Israel has the highest ratio of university degrees per capita in the world, adding to the fascination of old and new traditions combined.

Perhaps one of the most highly anticipated sites of Israel is the Dead Sea, the mystical salt water lake nestled between Israel and Jordan. It is one of the world's saltiest bodies of water and at its greatest depth, it is the lowest elevation on dry earth (-1,237 ft. deep). Its shores are 1,388 ft. below sea level. The Dead Sea has attracted visitors from around the Mediterranean basin for thousands of years. Biblically, it was a place of refuge for King David. It was one of the world's first health resorts (for Herod the Great), and it has been the supplier of a wide variety of products, from balms for Egyptian mummification to potash for fertilizers. Despite this, the Dead Sea's salt content is so high that it cannot actually support any life, hence the name, "Dead Sea."

## VISAS, PASSPORTS, AND OTHER ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

A visa for your visit to Israel is **not necessary** for US citizens. If you hold a passport from another country, check with your local consulate about requirements for travel to Israel.



All passengers traveling internationally are required to have a passport. Most countries require that the passport be valid for at least six (6) months beyond the conclusion of your trip, so please check the expiration date carefully. It is also recommended you have a minimum of three blank pages in your passport when traveling, as many countries require blank pages. Please carry proper identification (your passport) on you and do not leave it in your suitcase or hotel room. Most countries have laws that require you to carry your passport with you at all times.



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## COUNTRY CODES

The country code for Israel is 972. When calling to Israel from overseas, dial your international access code (011 from the US/Canada), followed by the country code, area code, and phone number. Phone numbers in Israel are 11 digits in length. Dialing from the US/Canada: 011 972+#### ####.



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## CURRENCY

The official currency of Israel is the New Israeli Shekel.

Bank hours: 8.30am to 12pm, Sunday through Friday, and 4pm to 6pm Sundays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. On Jewish holiday eves, banks open 8.30am to 12pm.

1 NEW ISRAELI SHEKEL (NIS) = 100 Agorot

- Banknote denominations: NIS - 20, 50, 100, 200
- Coin denominations: Agorot - 5, 10, 50; NIS - 1, 5, 10

For the most current exchange rates, please go to our website at [Globusjourneys.com/Currency](http://Globusjourneys.com/Currency).

Credit cards are widely accepted (mostly Visa and MasterCard), and you should have no problems using them in larger shops and restaurants.

The Visa logo by an ATM does not mean it takes all types of Visa cards. We recommend Bank Leumi ATMs, as they readily accept foreign credit cards.



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## BUDGETING AND SHOPPING

The following budget guidelines are just approximate values or starting values for meals and are per person. Actual prices will vary widely by restaurant and city within a country but below are some averages as provided by our experienced personnel.

- The approximate cost of a soft drink/mineral water/coffee is 8-10 NIS.
- An average lunch consisting of a salad or sandwich and a soda or water starts at approximately 40 NIS.
- Dinner at a mid-range restaurant with dessert and a non-alcoholic beverage starts at approximately 120 NIS.

Shopping specialties: Blue and white Armenian pottery, wooden craftware (especially olive wood), bibles/ brooches/boxes inset with mother of pearl, diamonds and jewelry, leather goods, Dead Sea mineral products.



## TIPPING

Outside of restaurants or food delivery, tipping is not common in Israel.

- At restaurants, tipping 10-15% is a reasonable amount. 15-20% is considered a very generous tip. Tips are generally left in cash. Not all restaurants accept tips left on credit card payments.
- Taxis are common in Israel. We recommend you negotiate the fare price before entering the taxi; ensure the meter is on before leaving. There are surcharges for calling a taxi and luggage. Tipping taxi drivers is not customary in Israel.
- Hotel staff is not commonly tipped, except bartenders or room service, in which case 10% is an acceptable amount.

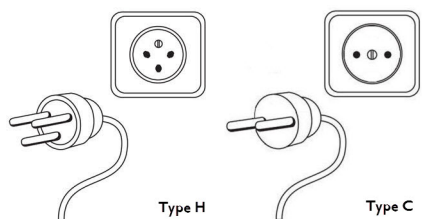


## ELECTRICITY AND ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

### Outlets

Voltage for outlets is 220V. North American voltage is generally 110V. Therefore, you will need a converter for your travels. Adapters will be necessary to adapt your plug into the outlet, but these may not convert the voltage, so both devices are necessary.

Israel uses an adapter that has a round, 3-prong plug as well as the more common European 2-prong, type C plug.



## TEMPERATURES

To help you plan, below are average low and high temperatures for Israel.

Month	Tel Aviv	Jerusalem
January	49/63°F	41/53°F
February	49/64°F	40/55°F
March	52/69°F	43/60°F
April	57/74°F	50/68°F
May	64/79°F	56/75°F
June	70/85°F	60/79°F
July	74/88°F	64/81°F
August	76/89°F	64/82°F
September	73/86°F	63/80°F
October	66/82°F	58/74°F
November	59/76°F	49/66°F
December	51/67°F	56/42°F

To convert to Celsius, subtract 30, then divide by 2. While not exact, this simple formula will give a close estimation.



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## FOOD SPECIALTIES

Falafel, hummus, tehina (tahini), couscous, fish, and olives/olive oil.

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## A FEW WORDS OF THE LOCAL LANGUAGE

### Hebrew (pronounced as):

**Hello:** Shalom, **Goodbye:** Le'hitra'ot, **Good morning:** Boker tov, **Good evening:** Erev tov, **Thanks (a lot):** Toda (raba), **Please:** Be'vakasha, **1:** Echad, **2:** Sh'nayeem, **3:** Shalosh, **4:** Arba, **5:** Chamesh, **6:** Shesh, **7:** Sheva, **8:** She'mone, **9:** Tesha, **10:** Eser.

### Arabic (pronounced as):

**Good morning:** Sabah el khair, **Good evening:** Masaa el khair, **Thank you:** Shokrun, **Please:** Men Fadluch, **Do you speak English?:** Be'tetkalem englizi?, **I don't understand:** Ana mosh fahem, **Please write it down:** Ekteb hali men fadlak, **How much is this?:** Bikam dah?, **1:** Wahed, **2:** Ethnein, **3:** Thalàtha, **4:** Arba'a, **5:** Hamsà, **6:** Seta, **7:** Seba'a, **8:** Thamània, **9:** Tesa'a, **10:** Ash'ra, **20:** Eshreen, **30:** Thalatheen, **40:** Arbae'en, **50:** Hamseen, **60:** Seteen, **70:** Sabèen, **80:** Thamanen, **90:** Tesa'een, **100:** May'a, **150:** May'a u hamseen, **200:** Metein, **Where is...?:** Fain...?, **Telephone:** Telephone, **Bathroom:** Hammam, **Bottled water:** Maya maadaneya, **Tea:** Shaay, **Coffee:** Ahwa.

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## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE COUNTRY INFORMATION

Additional country-specific information for US citizens can be found on the US Government's website [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov). Here, you can find the most up-to-date information about destination descriptions, passports/visas, safety and security, transportation, travel local laws, alerts/warnings, vaccinations, and more. For citizens of other nations, we recommend you consult your local consulate for travel information, regulations, and requirements.

Last Updated 10/12/18