

13 Day Pilgrimage to Cairo and the Holy Land

Day 1 - Houston / Istanbul

Depart Houston on Turkish Airlines to Istanbul.

Day 2 - Istanbul / Cairo

Arrive in Istanbul and change planes to Cairo. Upon arrival into Cairo, you will be met and transferred to your hotel for dinner and overnight.

Day 3 - Cairo

Drive to the Egyptian Museum of Antiquities for a detailed, guided tour of the treasures of ancient Egypt. Among other fascinating exhibits, see the contents of the treasures of the Tomb of Tutankhamen which fill the Mohammed Ali, an all-impressive landmark. Then visit Old Cairo and walk backwards in time, Cairo's Old City, Roman Towers, and a visit to the El-Khalili Bazaar. Return to your hotel for dinner and overnight.

Day 4 - Pyramids of Giza / Memphis And Sakkara

Today's tour of Cairo includes the great pyramid of Giza (one of the Seven Wonders) and the Sphinx. Continue to Memphis, capital of Egypt's Old Kingdom (3000-2270BC) to see the Alabaster Sphinx, constructed in honor of an unknown Pharaoh between 1700 & 1400 BC. Sakkara has the Step Pyramid, which is Egypt's oldest pyramid, built by King Zoster. Continue to the Egyptian Museum containing treasures of ancient Egypt, including King Tut-Ankh-Aman. Return to your hotel for dinner and overnight.

Day 5 - Cairo / Tel Aviv

Morning tour of Cairo visiting old Cairo Churches including St. Sergio, where the Holy Family stayed; continue to see the Hanging Church, which is a famous site in Coptic Cairo, which was built atop the walls of the 4th century BC with its Roman features of Babylon. Visit Ben Ezra Synagogue, the oldest synagogue in Cairo, built in the 9th century on the site where the pharaohs daughter found Moses among the reeds. This afternoon, transfer to the airport for you flight to Tel Aviv and have dinner and overnight.

Day 6 - Mt. Carmel / Stella Maris / Caesarea/ Tiberias

We travel via the coast to Caesarea, where the Romans held Paul prisoner. Visit the Roman and Crusader ruins. Continue onto Stella Maris, a Carmelite Monastery with the Madonna of Mt. Carmel then time for Mass. Drive through the Jezreel Valley to Tiberias for dinner and overnight.

Day 7 - The Ministry of Christ in the Galilee: Tiberias / Boat ride - Sea of Galilee / Capernaum / Mt. Beatitudes / Caesarea Philippi

Some of today's highlights are a boat ride across the Sea of Galilee to Capernaum to see the synagogue and St. Peter's house, a visit to the Mount of the Beatitudes where the Sermon on the Mount was given, to Tabgha to see the splendid mosaic about the miracle of the loaves and fishes, and to the nearby Church of Peter's Primacy where Peter was told " Feed my lambs, feed my sheep." There will be an unforgettable Mass near the shores of the Sea of Galilee at the Primacy or Mt. Beatitudes. In the afternoon, we visit Caesarea Philippi, location of the testimony of St. Peter and where Jesus answered him "You are the Rock and upon this rock I will build my Church." Dinner and overnight at your hotel in the Galilee.

Day 8 - Cana / Nazareth / Basilica of the Annunciation / Mt. Tabor / Bethlehem

We start the day with a visit to Cana, the village of Jesus' first miracle of changing water into wine; here couples may renew their wedding vows. Continue to the Basilica of Annunciation in Nazareth where we will celebrate Mass and visit Mary's Well and the Church of the Angel Gabriel. Drive on to Mount Tabor, scene of the Transfiguration. Afterwards drive through the Jordan Valley and then up through the Judean hills to the Holy City of Jerusalem. Dinner and overnight in Bethlehem.

Day 9 - Holy City and Bethlehem the Nativity / Mt. Olives / Church of Visitation / Shepherd's Field / Church of the Nativity

On the first day in Jerusalem we present an overview for a better understanding of its geography and some of the key sites surrounding the area. This includes a dramatic view of the Old City from the Mount of Olives, revealing a city with 4000 years of history. From this vantage point see much of what makes Jerusalem such a unique city to the three major religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam. We then head to the village of Ein Karem, the birthplace of St. John the Baptist and to the Church of Visitation where the Blessed Virgin Mary visited her cousin, Elizabeth, and proclaimed the 'Magnificat'. In the afternoon we drive to the Shepherd's Fields where the angels announced the birth of Jesus. Then we visit the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem that stands upon the site where Jesus was born. Mass in Bethlehem or the Shepherds Fields. Dinner and overnight in Bethlehem.

Day 10 - Jerusalem/ Stations of the Cross / Church of the Holy Sepulchre / St. Anne's Church / Ecce Homo / Wailing Wall / Upper Room / Dormition

Early in the morning we retrace the last steps of Jesus. As we walk along the Via Dolorosa (Way of Sorrow), through the markets of the Old City praying the Stations of the Cross, we reflect on the greatness of His sacrifice. Finally we arrive at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre for Mass. After breakfast at our hotel we return to the Old City of Jerusalem to visit St. Anne's Church, the home of the Virgin Mary and her parents Saints Joachim and Anne. We pass the Ecce Homo where Pilate proclaimed "Behold the man"; then the Wailing Wall, the most holy place for Jews. Nearby is the Dome of the Rock and the Haram al Sharif or Temple Mount. We exit at Mt. Zion. At the Cenacle we visit the Upper Room of the Last Supper. Next we go to Dormition Abbey where we believe the Blessed Mary died. We end the day at St. Peter in Gallicantu where Peter denied Him thrice. We plan to have an audience this afternoon with His Beatitude, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem. Dinner and overnight at the hotel in Bethlehem.

Day 11 - The Passion of Jesus' Last Hours / Bethany / Palm Sunday / Dominus Fleuit / Gethsemane / Cave of Betrayal / Cave of Assumption / Pater Noster

We begin our day with a visit to Bethany where Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. Then onto the Mt. of Olives to walk the Palm Sunday route stopping at Dominus Fleuit, where Jesus wept over Jerusalem. Drive to Gethsemane, the Rock of Agony where Jesus prayed His last prayer before his arrest. Visit the cave of betrayal then the cave of the Assumption of Mary to heaven. Back on the Mt. of Olives we visit the Pater Noster with the Lords Prayer in many languages, and the Ascension from where ascended to Heaven. Dinner and overnight at the hotel in Bethlehem.

Day 12 - The Wilderness: Jericho / Mt. Temptation / Dead Sea

The desert east of Jerusalem is rich in Christian tradition. Further east, just off the Roman road that Jesus 'walked', is Wadi Qelt gorge, site of the Monastery of St George. At the oasis town of Jericho, visit the excavations of the oldest city in the world and view Mt. Temptation

where Jesus fasted and was tempted by Satan. On the way back there is time for a swim (or rather a float!) in the mineral-rich waters of the Dead Sea, renowned for its healing properties. In the afternoon, there will be time for you to revisit some of your favorite sites and time for last minute buying of gifts for your loved ones. Dinner and overnight at the hotel in Bethlehem.

Day 13 - Tel Aviv/ Istanbul / Houston

This morning, transfer to the airport and fly to Istanbul and change planes to Houston.