



## INFORMATION ON TRAVEL TO ISRAEL

Welcome to Israel!

### Airport security:

Arrival: you will receive a blue entry form on entry into Israel in lieu of a passport stamp. Please keep this in your passport until your departure from Israel.

Departure: 24 hours or less before your scheduled departure time, you should complete online airline check-in and print out your boarding card prior to arriving to the airport. Should you not be able to do this, you need to check in at one of the kiosks upon arrival at the airport and print out your boarding card. You can then proceed directly to the security check and from there to the airline desk to drop off your luggage.

Please note that tourists should be at the airport for the security check 3 hours prior to departure. Tourists flying business class or first class – 2 hours prior to departure.

### Passport and visa requirements

To enter Israel, a passport must be valid for a minimum of six (6) months from the date of intended arrival. Please check the website of the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs about visa requirements and procedures: <http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ConsularServices/Pages/Visas.aspx>

### Taxis:

There is a taxi stand outside the arrival hall at Ben Gurion International Airport. All rates are set from the airport to a specific town, so that a meter should **not** be used. If taking taxis outside of Ben Gurion Airport, however, be sure to ask the driver to use the meter. All licensed taxi drivers use white cars with a green 'taxi sign' and have their name and license number inside the car.

**Shared taxis** from the airport, operated by Neshar Tours (<http://www.neshertours.co.il/about-us>), combine convenience and affordability: they take passengers to specific addresses in Jerusalem and cost around 60-70 ILS (a bit less than \$20) per person. They run around the clock from the airport; reservations are required in the opposite direction. The ride into the city usually takes around 40 minutes, though traffic may add another 30 minutes.

### Currency:

The local currency is the New Israeli Shekel (ILS), with the following denominations:

200 / 100 / 50 / 20 bank notes

10 / 5 / 2 / 1 / ½ / 10 agurot coins (1 ILS=100 agurot)

Money can be changed at post offices, banks, change places and hotels. If changing at hotels, exchange rates are usually lower than elsewhere. It is recommended to use post offices for large amounts, as there are no commission fees.

Restaurants, hotels, stores and entertainment centers accept major credit cards such as American Express, Visa, MasterCard and Diners.

### Bank hours:

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Most banks are open daily in the morning, 8:30 – 12:00am. A few banks open again in the afternoon, 4:00— 5:30pm. On Saturdays all banks are closed.

### Electricity:

The Israeli power supply is single phase 220 volts at 50 Hertz. Make sure to bring adaptors; some hotels might ask for a deposit for the use of adaptors.

### Adaptors



### Israeli electric plug



### Gratuities:

Gratuities are not obligatory, though it is common to leave 10-15% tips for hotel staff, waiters, drivers, and guides.

### Weather:

**June and July are summer months in Israel, though it may still be a bit cold in the evenings in Jerusalem.**

Temperature in Tel Aviv is usually between 27° to 35°centigrade (75° to 95° Fahrenheit). Jerusalem and the Golan Heights are approx. 3° centigrade cooler (5.5° Fahrenheit), while the city of Eilat is usually 3°centigrade warmer. Desert areas (Jerusalem/the Negev/Dead Sea) are very dry, while the rest of the country is humid.

### VAT:

Most prices in Israel include 17% VAT. All goods and services purchased in the city of Eilat are exempt from VAT. VAT is reimbursed on the following tourist services, as long as the tourist does not possess Israeli citizenship:

- Accommodation (hotels, youth hostels, field schools and camping)
- Domestic flights, organized tours and driver guides
- Car rental
- Meals in hotel restaurants where the guest is staying
- Many gift items

For reimbursement:

- Look for the 'tax refund' sticker on the business
- Ask for a special VAT refund invoice, *in addition* to a receipt
- At the airport VAT counter, you will need to show your passport, visa, the special invoice, receipt, and the goods you have purchased

### Time zone:

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Israeli standard time is 2 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time and 7 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time.

**Shabbat (Saturday) in Israel**

All public offices in Israel are closed on Saturday, as are many private businesses. All buses and trains stop operating an hour before sunset on Friday, and resume one hour after sunset on Saturday. In religious neighborhoods (including large sections of Jerusalem), the religious character of Shabbat is observed to its fullest, and some streets are closed to traffic.

**Internet and mobile phones:**

Internet connection is widely available. Mobile phone connections are excellent, even in rural areas, and roaming agreements exist with most international mobile phone companies. It is possible to rent mobile phones or SIM cards.

The international dialing code for Israel is +972.

**Dress:**

Christian, Jewish, and Muslim religious sites require modest dress.

**Water:**

Unless otherwise indicated, tap water is suitable for drinking. Filtered and mineral water are widely available.

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