PROGRAM ITINERARY

DAY 1

ARRIVAL IN ISRAEL: FIRST ENCOUNTERS WITH A LIVING DEMOCRACY

Mon. Dec 13, 2027

- Welcome to Israel. Upon arrival, meet your J² Expert Educator, who will accompany you throughout this experience - helping frame conversations, provide context, and support reflection as you encounter the many voices that make up Israeli society.
- Transfer to Tel Aviv and check into your hotel.
- This evening, gather for a welcome dinner at a local restaurant, offering your first taste of Israel's vibrant culinary culture and an opportunity to begin building community as a group while preparing for the days ahead.

Overnight: Tel Aviv Meals: Dinner

DAY 2

TEL AVIV: MEDIA, SOCIETY & FIRST ENCOUNTERS

Tue. Dec 14, 2027

- Begin the day with a briefing by Ariel Oseran, Senior Middle East Correspondent for i24NEWS, offering a clear-eyed, journalist's perspective on Israel's political landscape, regional dynamics, and the pressures shaping Israeli democracy today.
- Participate in a hands-on volunteer experience with MOLET, supporting families displaced from communities near the Gaza border. This

encounter offers a direct connection to stories of resilience and mutual responsibility.

- Enjoy a tasting experience at Levinsky Market, an accessible introduction to the cultural diversity of Israeli society, paced appropriately for your first full day.
- Visit the Magen David Adom HQ in Ramle - the most advanced blood bank in the Middle East - complete with cutting edge bio-medical technology to serve Israel at all times.
- Evening at leisure to explore Tel Aviv independently.

Overnight: Tel Aviv Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 3

SHARED SOCIETY, SECURITY & LIFE IN THE NORTH

Wed. Dec 15, 2027

- Check out and travel north along the Mediterranean coast.
- Begin at Givat Haviva with Mohammad Darawshe for a frank and open conversation on Jewish-Arab relations, encouraging candid dialogue about the challenges and possibilities of building a shared society in Israel.
- Continue north to the city of Ma'alot-Tarshiha for a focused, place-based program exploring memory, education, and life in a northern border community. Visit the site of the 1974 Ma'alot school massacre, where students and teachers were taken hostage, and engage in a guided conversation about how this event continues to shape Israeli collective memory, education, and security consciousness.
- Continue to the Alma Research and Education Center, where Sarit Zahavi will provide an in-depth security briefing on Israel's northern

border, offering critical insight into regional threats and daily life in frontline communities.

- End the day with a stop at a local brewery, where you will enjoy a beer tasting alongside a conversation with the owners or local residents about life in the north, entrepreneurship under pressure, and the ways communities sustain resilience in the face of ongoing uncertainty. This relaxed setting offers both perspective and a chance to unwind.
- Dinner at the hotel.

Overnight: Upper Galilee Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 4

THE NORTHERN FRONT: SECURITY, LANDSCAPE & EXPERIENCE

Thu. Dec 16, 2027

- Visit a northern kibbutz affected by recent conflict, where residents will share firsthand experiences of evacuation, uncertainty, and rebuilding life along Israel's border with Lebanon.
- Continue with a Jeep tour through the Golan Heights, traveling across dramatic terrain while exploring how geography, history, and security intersect.
- Ascend Mount Bental, overlooking Syria, for a geopolitical overview of the region and its strategic significance.
- Conclude the day at Odem Mountain Winery, enjoying a tasting of high-altitude wines and a moment of relaxation in a complex region.
- Return to the hotel for dinner.

Overnight: Upper Galilee Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 5

FROM TRAUMA TO JERUSALEM: HUMAN EXPERIENCE & TRANSITION

Fri. Dec 17, 2027

- Begin the day with a conversation with an Israeli trauma expert or psychologist, exploring the emotional and psychological impact of ongoing conflict and the ways individuals and communities cope with sustained uncertainty.
- Travel south toward Jerusalem.
- As the city begins to slow and shift into sacred time, gather at the Jerusalem Tayelet overlooking the Old City for a live musical experience with Tam Tamim. Through rhythm, energy, and communal atmosphere, this moment offers a powerful emotional transition - creating space for reflection, connection, and joy at the threshold of Shabbat.
- Check into your hotel with time to prepare for Shabbat and transition into the rhythm of sacred time.
- This evening, join the Reform community of Kamatz in Mevasseret Zion for a joyful Kabbalat Shabbat service reflecting the vibrancy of contemporary Israeli Jewish life. Following services, enjoy a communal Shabbat dinner - an opportunity to experience Shabbat around the Israeli table through conversation, song, and shared tradition.

Overnight: Jerusalem Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 6

JERUSALEM: SACRED SPACE & SHARED REALITY

Sat. Dec 18, 2027

- Enjoy a relaxed Shabbat morning with time to rest or attend services.
- Later, walk through the Old City of Jerusalem, encountering the sacred spaces of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam while exploring the layered realities of this shared and contested city.
- Meet with an educator from the Rossing Center for Education and Dialogue to explore how interreligious engagement is being practiced in Jerusalem today. Through guided conversation, consider how listening across difference can deepen understanding and strengthen shared civic responsibility.
- Conclude Shabbat with a meaningful Havdalah overlooking the Old City as you mark the transition from sacred time back into the rhythm of the week together.
- Dialogue with Professor Reuven Hazan of Hebrew University for an overview of Israel's political system and current dynamics.
- Evening at leisure in Jerusalem.

Overnight: Jerusalem Meals: Breakfast

DAY 7

THE GAZA ENVELOPE: MEMORY, COURAGE & RESILIENCE

Sun. Dec 19, 2027

- Travel south to the Gaza Envelope region for a powerful day of encounter shaped by the events of October 7.
- Visit a kibbutz near the Gaza border, meeting with a resident who will share personal experiences from the attack and the ongoing process of rebuilding.
- Continue to the Observers Hill Lookout, learning about the role of

women in Israel's defense.

- Spend time in Sderot, exploring daily life in a community shaped by both vulnerability and resilience.
- Visit the Nova Music Festival memorial site near Kibbutz Re'im, a deeply moving space of remembrance created in response to profound loss.
- Return to Jerusalem and gather to reflect and process the day's experiences.

Overnight: Jerusalem Meals: Breakfast

DAY 8

POLITICS, POWER & COMPETING NARRATIVES

Mon. Dec 20, 2027

- Engage with two political voices - one from the left and one from the right - for a comparative conversation on Israel's future, governance, and societal divisions.
- Travel to Bethlehem with Palestinian journalist Rami Nazzal, gaining insight into daily life and political realities from within Palestinian society.
- Continue to Gush Etzion, hearing from a local resident about life beyond the Green Line.
- Visit the Israel Religious Action Center (IRAC) for a conversation with Orly Erez-Likhovski on religion and state, judicial reform, and the role of civil society.

Overnight: Jerusalem Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 9

MEMORY, PERSONAL STORY & CLOSURE

Tue. Dec 21, 2027

- Check out of the hotel.
- Begin the day at Mount Herzl, Israel's national cemetery and a central site of collective memory.
- Meet with David and Hazel Brief, parents of Yona Brief, for a deeply personal conversation reflecting on their family's experience and the broader realities facing Israeli society today. Set within Mount Herzl, this encounter connects an intimate story to the national narrative of sacrifice, memory, and resilience.
- Walk through Mahane Yehuda Market, experiencing the energy and diversity of everyday Jerusalem life.
- Visit the National Library of Israel, home to one of the world's most significant collections of Jewish cultural and intellectual history.
- Continue with a hands-on baking experience with Rabbi Nissimi, a reservist supporting families during times of loss. Through food, conversation, and shared experience, explore how care and community sustain Israeli society.
- Gather for a farewell dinner and closing conversation, reflecting on the experiences, relationships, and questions that will continue traveling home with you.
- Transfer to Ben-Gurion Airport for departure.

Overnight: Flight Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

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