

Mike and Adeena's Excellent Israeli Culinary Adventure - Dec. 2023

November 30 - December 8, 2023



PRESENTED TO
Via Sabra

PRESENTED BY



CREATED BY
Avihai Tsabari |

LAST UPDATED ON
Wednesday, July 26

Mike and Adeena's Excellent Israeli Culinary Adventure - Dec. 2023

November 30 - December 8, 2023

Thursday, November 30

- 11:00 AM The Art of Coffee and Pastry: An Israeli Culinary Celebration
- Culinary Discoveries: Tel Aviv's Shuk and Beyond
- 1. Levinsky Market
- 2. Hatikva Market
- 3. Bnei Brak
- Drive back to the hotel, rest and get ready for the evening program
- Festive welcome dinner at Ha'achim Restaurant
- Optional: SHAKE IT UP! TLV Cocktail Crawl
- Tel Aviv - Royal Beach Hotel

Friday, December 1

- Breakfast at your hotel
- Welcome to Carmel Market: An Intro to Food, Flavor, and Community with Adeena
- Get to know the White City
- Explore Israel's Culinary Heritage at Asif
- OPTIONAL: Tel Aviv's Street Art Stories - Colorful Graffiti Tour
- Shabbat Unplugged: An Intimate Shabbat Dinner Experience in Tel Aviv
- Tel Aviv - Royal Beach Hotel

Saturday, December 2

- Breakfast at your hotel
- Bagels, Borekas, Baklava, Oh My!
- Tour of the picturesque Old Jaffa
- Option 1: Gazoz Workshop
- Option 2: The Arak Effect - Tishrey Cocktail Workshop
- Free time & rest
- Mike and Adeena's Favorite Tel Avivian Street Food Spots
- Tel Aviv - Royal Beach Hotel

Sunday, December 3

- Breakfast at your hotel & check-out
- The Bounty of Israel's Wilderness
- Field-to-Table Lunch Al Fresco
- The Olive Journey
- Travel south and check in to your hotel
- Gaze out over the Ramon Crater (Makhtesh Ramon)
- Dinner at the hotel's Rosemarine chef restaurant
- South - Beresheet Hotel

Monday, December 4

- Breakfast at your hotel
- Experience the desert your way:
- Option 1: A Serene Start to Your Day
- Option 2: Hike Through This Desert Wonder
- Option 3: Conquer the Crater in an ATV
- Fragrant Trails
- Group 1: Carmey Avdat Farm
- Group 2: Orlyya Farm
- Delectable Desert Dishes
- Leisure time at your hotel
- Starry Night Desert Extravagaza
- South - Beresheet Hotel

Tuesday, December 5

- Breakfast at your hotel & check out
- Discovers Israel's Agritech Innovations
- Desert Dairy Delights
- Ascend to Jerusalem
- Authentic Arabic Lunch at Reshta Restaurant
- Women and Wine with Hashizra
- Welcome to Jerusalem!
- Jerusalem - The Orient Hotel

Wednesday, December 6

- Breakfast at your hotel
- Interpreting Complexities
- Above the Holy City
- Old City Group Tours
- Track 1: Iconic Sights and Delectable Treats
- Track 2: Crafted in Tradition
- Savoring the Souk - Culinary Tour of the Arab Market
- Azura - A Machane Yehuda Market Gem
- Streaming Nations: Exploring US Attitudes Towards Israel Through Netflix
- Jerusalem - The Orient Hotel

Thursday, December 7

Friday, December 8

- Breakfast at your hotel
- Where East Meets West
- Mike vs Adeena - Iron Chef-Style
- Cultural Mosaic: Exploring Israel's Ethnic

Diversity

- Track 1: Identity in Focus: Exploring Jewish and Israeli Heritage
- Track 2: Discover Nachlaot's Rich Heritage
- Hummus Heaven: Lunch at Ben Sira
- OPTIONAL: Experience Jerusalem's Chanukah Magic
- A Night of Lights!
- Jerusalem - The Orient Hotel

- Breakfast at your hotel & check out
- Celebrating Inclusivity and Diversity at Beit Hagalgalim
- Group transfer to Ben Gurion Airport

DAY 1 CULINARY JOURNEY THROUGH TEL AVIV: FROM COFFEE TO COCKTAILS

Thursday,
November 30



■ **11:00 AM The Art of Coffee and Pastry: An Israeli Culinary Celebration** - Join us as we kick off this incredible journey at ANU Museum of the Jewish People together with FOODISH. Jewish cuisine, like the Jewish people, is a colorful mosaic comprised of countless flavors and techniques. FOODISH, the culinary arm of the ANU Museum, tells the shared stories of the role food plays in Judaism and Israel. One of these stories is that of the *caffè v' ma'afe*, also known as coffee and pastry. Israelis just love a mid-morning or early afternoon coffee break with a sweet pastry. But the way the coffee is prepared -- and the choice of pastry -- may vary depending on one's cultural background. The concept of *caffè v'ma'afe* represents a moment of joy, hospitality, and cultural preservation in Israel. It is not merely a culinary practice, but a cherished tradition that fosters a sense of community, allowing people to take a break from their daily routines and bond over delightful treats and conversation. We'll kick off the tour with a spread of traditional Middle Eastern pastries served alongside coffee prepared in its most common Israeli expressions - Turkish, espresso, and *hafuch* (similar to a cappuccino), to name a few. So get caffeinated and let's go!

■ **Culinary Discoveries: Tel Aviv's Shuk and Beyond** - We will split into three groups to explore Tel Aviv's storied markets. While Tel Aviv may be known for its nightlife and beaches, the markets here are where life really happens, particularly on Friday mornings as residents scramble to prepare for Shabbat. Through these culinary tasting tours, we'll begin to scratch the surface of Israeli cuisine.

■ **1. Levinsky Market** - Located in the heart of the Florentine neighborhood, this market specializes in spices, dried fruits and nuts, and Mediterranean delicacies. Thanks to an old-new mashup of a trendy neighborhood mixed with influences from Greek and Iranian immigrants who founded the market, Levinsky combines history and modernity, set against the backdrop of the area's unique, almost indescribable character.

■ **2. Hatikva Market** - Shuk Hatikva is a lesser-known gem and loved by locals, treasured for the glimpse it offers into the core of Israeli immigrant culture. Since the market's more recent renovation, it has become a joyful, colorful place that still retains its authentic appeal. Sample fresh produce, stop for a bite at a Yemenite restaurant, people-watch, and have a chat with the local vendors for a taste of everyday Israel in all its diversity.

■ **3. Bnei Brak** - Not quite a market and more of a greatest-hits of traditional homemade food set along a warren of crowded streets, the Ultra-Orthodox city of Bnei Brak is where you want to go to experience the frantic energy of pre-Shabbat preparations. With oversized pots and pans sizzling away, the aromas waft out onto the streets and will leave you with the feeling of having stepped into a family's home on a Friday.

■ **Drive back to the hotel, rest and get ready for the evening program**

■ **Festive welcome dinner at Ha'achim Restaurant** - Simultaneously trendy and unpretentious, Ha'achim is the perfect representation of that only-in-Tel Aviv vibe. Take in the vibrant atmosphere while you enjoy delicious, traditional, yet elevated Middle Eastern cuisine – all while feeling like you're sitting around the table at a friend's house. The restaurant uses the freshest local ingredients in their inventive Levantine dishes, set in a lively atmosphere complete with packed tables, music, and cool crowds any time of day or night.

■ **Optional: SHAKE IT UP! TLV Cocktail Crawl** - The kickoff to the weekend in Israel, Thursday night is THE night to head out on the town for a drink. While you'll find classic cocktails at most bars, many have dreamt up whimsical concoctions that feature local flavor profiles and homegrown ingredients using herbs, spices and culinary influences from all over the country. Mike and Adeena can point you toward their favorite cocktail bars, and if you're lucky, their favorite bartenders, too.

■ **Tel Aviv - Royal Beach Hotel**

[object Object]



■ **Breakfast at your hotel** - Israelis take their breakfasts very seriously. Each morning, you'll be met with a vast buffet of Israeli foods ranging from different breads, cheeses, salads, spreads, egg preparations, dips, olives, pastries, and so much more. Load up your plate with a little bit of this and a bit of that, but be sure to leave room for the rest of the day's food!

■ **Welcome to Carmel Market: An Intro to Food, Flavor, and Community with Adeena** - Adeena and the Carmel Market are an inseparable duo, so much so that Adeena's own husband, Jay Shofet, described the market as "a third person in our marriage." The market was the inspiration for her best-selling book, *Sababa*, and continues to be a throughline in her daily life. Mike has been hitting the Carmel since his teenage years, and you can see him walking through the market with Phil Rosenthal on the hit TV show, "Somebody Feed Phil." At a hidden location set inside the shuk, Adeena and Mike will talk about the culinary and cultural history of the shuk, and why it endures as Tel Aviv's culinary beating heart. They will then provide you with a curated list of their must-stop stalls, spice shops, and coffee places--and then give you time to explore on your own.

■ **Get to know the White City** - After tasting our way through the shuk, we'll meet at Kikar Magen David at the top of the market to kick off our on-foot exploration of Tel Aviv. You'll learn about Tel Aviv's history as the first Hebrew city, its unique Bauhaus architecture which led to the city being dubbed as The White City, and how it developed on top of sand dunes just outside of Jaffa. Along the way, Adeena and Mike will share their own stories of the city.

■ **Explore Israel's Culinary Heritage at Asif** - Asif is a non-profit culinary center that aims to cultivate and nurture Israel's diverse food culture (Mike and Adeena both sit on its board). We'll tour the library where there are books selected by culinary experts (including Mike and Adeena) that represent Israeli, Arab, and Jewish cuisine from all over the world; visit the exhibition space that explores relationships between food, history, agriculture, and more; and, finally, visit the rooftop urban garden which grows rare varieties of herbs, including over 250 types of ezov (hyssop), the main ingredient in the za'atar spice blend. Light snacks will be provided.

■ **OPTIONAL: Tel Aviv's Street Art Stories - Colorful Graffiti Tour** - Known as Tel Aviv's graffiti hotspot, the hip Florentine neighborhood is full of original murals and fascinating street art. See Tel Aviv from a different perspective by meeting street artists gaining international recognition. Learn how to spot hard-to-find graffiti from famous artists, and gain a deeper understanding of Tel Aviv's urban art scene.

■ **Shabbat Unplugged: An Intimate Shabbat Dinner Experience in Tel Aviv** - We will come together as to welcome in Shabbat with an intimate Kabbalat Shabbat prayer service, led by Ethiopian singer Ester Rada, an Ethiopian-Israeli singer with a worldwide audience, as she blends soul music with traditional Jewish, religious tunes and Ethiopian influences. For dinner, we'll be joined by three Israeli chefs who will each cook an appetizer, entrée, and dessert based on their individual interpretations of Middle Eastern ingredients.

■ **Tel Aviv - Royal Beach Hotel**

[object Object]



■ **Breakfast at your hotel**

■ **Bagels, Borekas, Baklava, Oh My!** - We'll ease into our morning with a Jewish Shabbat brunch, pulling together classic Shabbat breakfast dishes from different cultures: jachnun, malawach, bagels and lox, burekas, sabich, and more. The brunch will celebrate Israel's culinary diversity and highlight the foods that come from the homes of different families. Through these dishes, we will partake in different ethnic traditions and sample recipes that have been brought to Israel from around the world and passed down through generations. Adeena, Mike, and Avihai from Via Sabra will each prepare and share their own favorite Shabbat morning dish, sharing through food and storytelling what Shabbat brunch means to them and how it connects to their families, backgrounds, and their experiences with Israeli culture.

■ **Tour of the picturesque Old Jaffa** - In two groups, we will walk through the beautiful Old Jaffa. One of the most ancient port cities in Israel and the Mediterranean basin, today, Jaffa is a mixed city, where Jews and Arabs live alongside each other. Tel Aviv, Jaffa's younger sister, was established centuries later, in the year 1909. Though the two were united into one municipality in 1949, each part has retained its unique feel and atmosphere. Jaffa has been regenerated in recent years with the old narrow streets and courtyards becoming a highly popular part of Tel Aviv's urban tapestry.

■ **Option 1: Gazoz Workshop** - Meet Benny Briga the legendary Gazoz master of Café Levinsky who, together with Adeena, co-authored the book Gazoz. Briga has reimagined the Turkish tradition of fermenting fruits and flowers in bubbly beverages with a classic Levinsky Market twist. Benny will teach us how to make our own gazoz using in-season fruits, herbs, and spices sourced from the market.

■ **Option 2: The Arak Effect - Tishrey Cocktail Workshop** - During this workshop, Israeli wine takes a back seat to allow incredible Israeli spirits, which are having a BIG moment, to shine! Tishrey Bar uses locally-made liquors like arak, gin, and whiskey in its cocktails, mixed with Israeli spices and herbs. Each cocktail tells the story of Israeli innovation, whether that's growing herbs in the desert, using contemporary distillation technologies, or aging whiskey in casks submerged in the Dead Sea. You'll have a chance to mix your own drinks as well.

■ **Free time & rest**

■ **Mike and Adeena's Favorite Tel Avivian Street Food Spots** - Explore Israel's famous street food scene by hopping between different restaurants. Israelis love stuffing food into pita like falafel, sabich, and shawarma, making a perfect pocket of delicious local flavors to enjoy on the go. For something quick, you can also stop by bakeries to enjoy burekas or sambusaks cooked in a traditional taboon (clay oven). Mike and Adeena will be happy to send you to their favorite spots in the city.

■ **Tel Aviv - Royal Beach Hotel**

[object Object]

DAY 4 ROOTED IN NATURE

Sunday, December 3

■ **Breakfast at your hotel & check-out**

■ **The Bounty of Israel's Wilderness** - Together with your guides, Nura and Avigail, get to know local, wild food from nature. Our ancestors have been foraging wild plants in the Judean Hills since Biblical times, and today our guides will help us connect the dots between Jewish and Israeli history, culture, and identity through wild, foraged food. Nura will teach us how each plant can be used both in the kitchen and for medicinal purposes, and help us gather local plants to be used in our meal.

■ **Field-to-Table Lunch Al Fresco** - After foraging, we'll collect what we gathered and watch Nura turn it into a delectable meal including sourdough bread with herbed dips, pickled salads, stuffed leaves, green-filled pastries, and more. We'll get to taste the fruits of our labor and relate in a whole new way to our heritage and the land in a whole new way by sampling food our ancestors ate in the very same spot.

■ **The Olive Journey** - Hila Alpert, a culinary writer, journalist, and presenter, will take us on a journey to explore the tradition of olive oil production, a staple in Middle Eastern cuisine. We'll pick olives straight from the tree and see the process they go through to transform from fruit to oil. Hila will share with us the history and significance of producing olive oil in the Holy Land, a ritual the Jewish people have upheld for centuries. With traces of clay bottles used for olive oil found in the region which date back 8,000 years, olive oil production is deeply tied to Israeli flavor, culture, and peoplehood. We'll sample high-quality olive oils and visit a shop where you can purchase some to take home to use for Chanukah.

■ **Travel south and check in to your hotel**

■ **Gaze out over the Ramon Crater (Makhtesh Ramon)** - Witness nature's artistry with a lookout over the Ramon Crater and learn about this unique geological crater formed by erosion.

■ **Dinner at the hotel's Rosemarine chef restaurant** - Enjoy stunning views of the crater and desert at Rosemarine restaurant, with Israeli-influenced dishes made with local ingredients and inspired by the essence of the desert.

■ **South - Beresheet Hotel**

[object Object]



■ **Breakfast at your hotel**

■ **Experience the desert your way:**

■ **Option 1: A Serene Start to Your Day** - Wind down with some time on your own where you can enjoy a leisurely luxury hotel morning, lounge by the pool, read a book overlooking the Ramon crater, or take advantage of the hotel's spa facilities (based on availability).

■ **Option 2: Hike Through This Desert Wonder** - See the Ramon Crater, an amazing formation, up close and personal. Take it slow by hiking the crater, and taking in the desert vegetation, stop at a viewpoint for a panoramic view, and learn about these geological marvels that make this area unique.

■ **Option 3: Conquer the Crater in an ATV** - Gear up for a morning of adventure on a self-driving ATV tour through the Ramon Crater. Experience the rugged landscape up close while taking in the endless desert scenery and, if the stars align, meeting some of the wildlife inhabitants of Israel's Negev desert.

■ **Fragrant Trails** - Avdat, once an ancient Nabatean city along the spice route, will act as our backdrop today for an introduction to the world of Middle Eastern spices and ancient agriculture. We'll get to mix our own spices from herbs and plants that can be found growing in the blooming Negev desert, bringing you closer to the surprisingly colorful flavor of Israel's desert. We'll then split into two groups and visit lone farms in the region. Lone farms are small, standalone farmsteads that are removed from populated areas, often specializing in produce like dairy, oil, or wine. Today, many are open to visitors or overnight stays, and offer a taste of life in the Negev as well as ancient agriculture, pulling us back to our roots and farther from the hustle and bustle of cities.

■ **Group 1: Carmey Avdat Farm** - This small family-owned and run lone farm and winery was built here, on the site where archaeological evidence has shown that wine was grown on this spot over 1,500 years ago. The farm is located near the ancient wine cellars of the Nabatean city of Avdat. The winery produces just 6,000 bottles of wine a year

■ **Group 2: Orlyya Farm** - Orlyaa Farm is named after the Goddess of Love, Aphrodite, who represents feminine power and wisdom.

Located a short drive from the ancient Nabatean settlement of Avdat, Orlyya focuses on agriculture, in particular the cultivation of oil from the Argan tree. Using ancient techniques, this family-run lone farm aims to help visitors bond with the earth as they understand the cultivation process. Through intentional environmental measures and maximum effort to minimize changes to the natural surroundings, the family has created a sustainable farm that produces argan oil used in food and cosmetics.

■ **Delectable Desert Dishes** - Mike and Adeena will show us their ways of balancing flavors and spices to prepare the most creamy hummus, concoct velvety tahini, and knead soft and fluffy pita dough.

■ **Leisure time at your hotel** - Wind down from the desert sun back at the hotel before our group meets again for a spectacular evening desert blowout event.

■ **Starry Night Desert Extravagaza** - It's not a mirage! Your evening under an endless canopy of stars awaits - with wine, spirits, music, star gazing, and dinner in the most magical setting you can imagine. Enjoy a delicious dinner accompanied by cocktails, wine, and a full bar consisting only of Israeli-made alcohol. Then, dance the night away at a concert by the one and only Shai Tsabari whose Mizrachi-Indie style fuses traditional oriental music with rock, pop, electronic, and world music.

■ **South - Beresheet Hotel**

[object Object]



■ Breakfast at your hotel & check out

■ **Discovers Israel's Agritech Innovations** - See the desert come to life at this leading agricultural center. Founded in 1981 with the goal of encouraging agricultural development on the country's periphery, the center utilizes the desert's natural resources together with Israel's groundbreaking drip irrigation technology to grow produce like olives, fruits, wine grapes, greens, as well as 70% of Israel's cherry tomato crops in the desert. Witnessing the desert in bloom represents the height of Start-up Nation innovation. This technology isn't only used here in Israel's Negev desert but has also been implemented at farms around the world, demonstrating Israel's marked impact in the field of agricultural innovation.

■ **Desert Dairy Delights** - Situated by a scenic stream carving its way through bare desert hills, Naot Farm is the labor of love of the Nahimov family who left life in the big city behind to fulfill their dream of following Ben-Gurion's vision of making the desert bloom. As they embarked on building a simple life in the desert, they started in a single tent with no running water, electricity, or bathroom. Constructing a pen for their 50 goats, the 'milk' of their labor began to flow, and their cheese production started. Another example of a thriving lone farm, today the farm has guest cabins, 2 pens, and an impressive cheese-making operation. Their brave endeavor is the perfect example of Israeli determination.

■ Ascend to Jerusalem

■ **Authentic Arabic Lunch at Reshta Restaurant** - For a change of scenery, we'll leave the desert and head to Ein Rafa Village just west of Jerusalem for lunch at Reshta Restaurant with Michael's friend JJ Jalil. Set amongst peaceful green fields, this hidden gem shines a spotlight on authentic Arabic food with a local interpretation that highlights fresh ingredients sourced from the surrounding fields. Chef Ranam Barhoum serves traditional dishes like siniya, kebabs, shish barak, and knaffe that will delight and excite any palate.

■ **Women and Wine with Hashizra** - Israeli wine culture has taken center stage over the last few years, with local wines winning some of the most prestigious global awards in the industry. Amid a traditionally male-dominated business, HaShizra was established as a sisterhood of wine and food, an innovative space for women to nurture their goals and dreams in the wine and food community, all while narrowing the industry's gender gap. Boasting a community of over 900 women (including Adeena) HaShizra is a place where women can band together to share knowledge, learn from one another, ask questions, and find inspiration from their peers. Meet some of Israel's rising stars within the wine world while tasting some lesser-known wines produced by these trailblazing women.

■ **Welcome to Jerusalem!** - We'll meet at the hotel for a cocktail to toast our arrival in Jerusalem, and this next phase of our journey. After checking in to the hotel and freshening up, wander through Jerusalem's iconic stone-lined streets, explore the Judaica shops, and people-watch in one of the world's oldest cities. We'll happily provide you with restaurant recommendations for dinner, or you can explore Jerusalem yourself and find a spot that speaks to you (and your appetite).

■ **Jerusalem - The Orient Hotel**

[object Object]



■ Breakfast at your hotel

■ **Interpreting Complexities** - Daniel Sherman will guide us through a conversation on the history, implications, and insights on the region's current geo-political situation. The local conflict is a highly political and often deeply personal topic for many, making this a unique opportunity to openly discuss, ask questions, and learn more about a region that, while volatile at times, is also deeply steeped in culture and history. Start to explore your own feelings about the situation, and carry those throughout the rest of the day we encounter locals of different backgrounds in Jerusalem. Will your feelings/thoughts change?

■ **Above the Holy City** - Get a 360° panoramic view of the Old and New Cities of Jerusalem from atop an ancient guard tower at the Tower of David grounds. See from above the difference between the ancient and modern aspects of Jerusalem and start to get a feel for the places you'll be exploring today.

■ **Old City Group Tours** - Explore the complexity of a city that is holy to the three major religions practiced in Israel - Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

■ **Track 1: Iconic Sights and Delectable Treats** - Meander through the Old City and observe different historical and religious sites that are holy to all three major religions. As you explore the streets and narrow pathways, you'll develop a stronger sense of the area's significance to so many different cultures. We'll go off-the-beaten-track to sites tucked into winding alleyways, enjoying classic Jerusalem delicacies along the way. As we arrive to the city's various Quarters, we'll see the major sites of each: the Jewish Quarter with its Roman Cardo and synagogues; the Christian Quarter with visitors and pilgrims spilling into the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and then we'll let our senses get lost in the bustling Arab market in the Muslim Quarter.

■ **Track 2: Crafted in Tradition** - While the city's distinctive architecture is one of the things that makes it iconic, the best way to absorb the true flavor of Jerusalem is to meet its inhabitants or, more specifically, its craftspeople. We will more deeply understand the complexities of the Old City as we meet artisans whose crafts are inspired by Jerusalem's unique mix of cultures and religions. Some craftspeople were born into their vocation, learning skills that have been passed down through the generations. You'll have a chance to view artwork, see the craftspeople in action, ask questions, and experience Jerusalem through their eyes.

■ **Savoring the Souk - Culinary Tour of the Arab Market** - The Arab Market (souk) in the Muslim Quarter will delight and overwhelm your senses, in the best way possible. A cacophony of shopkeepers yelling over the heads of visitors, tantalizing mountains of honey-covered Arabic sweets, and the smell of spices await you as walk through the market's narrow streets. At the shops, you'll be able to pick up original pieces of pottery, embroidered clothes, sheepskin, and more to remember your time in Jerusalem. We'll enjoy an array of Arabic delicacies – hummus, kebabs, and sweets, all while chatting with shopkeepers to understand their personal connection to the food, the market, and this city.

■ **Azura - A Machane Yehuda Market Gem** - A market institution, this family-run restaurant in the Iraqi section of the shuk has been serving up Turkish-inspired delicacies, slow-cooked to perfection since 1952. The food, while not fussy, evokes the nostalgia of eating your favorite family dishes at grandma's' table. Pots in the kitchen are brimming with traditional foods like kubbeh soup, sofrito, hummus, ketzitzot (patties), and red beets, cooked the old-fashioned way over kerosene burners.

■ **Streaming Nations: Exploring US Attitudes Towards Israel Through Netflix** - After a day of immersing ourselves in the many different cultures that make up Jerusalem, we will engage in a discussion of the portrayal of Israel in popular shows like Fauda, The Beauty Queen of Jerusalem, Shtisel, and others. Jessica Steinberg, culture editor for the Times of Israel, will be on hand to offer her unique perspective on the Americanized understanding of Israel and Israelis, and help us juxtapose that with everything we've seen and witnessed up until now.

■ **Jerusalem - The Orient Hotel**
[object Object]

DAY 8 CELEBRATING TRADITIONS OF THE EAST AND WEST Thursday, December 7



■ Breakfast at your hotel

■ **Where East Meets West** - Framing the day's activities, we begin with a fascinating panel discussion on the historic differences between Sephardi and Ashkenazi cultures. Expert speakers with deep knowledge of the foods and traditions of both cultures will help paint a picture of each of these heritages and how they are woven into the tapestry of Israel and Judaism. You will leave with deeper insight into everything you experienced over the week, enriching your understanding of the diversity here.

■ **Mike vs Adeena - Iron Chef-Style** - Your two hosts are thrust into the hot seat for this Iron Chef-style cookoff. With just a short window of time, Mike and Adeena will create their best dishes using Middle Eastern pantry staples, telling their own stories through their interpretations of the ingredients they're given. As they cook, they will share with us their passion for Israeli food and their journeys as they explore their own individual ties to the cuisine they both love so much. Efrat Enzel, renowned Israeli culinary consultant and TV host, will be with us to up the ante and add a little more fire to the kitchen to help bring out the chefs' very best. You'll get a front-row seat to witness the creative process of turning an ingredient into an experience with these two Israeli cuisine powerhouses.

■ **Cultural Mosaic: Exploring Israel's Ethnic Diversity** - Choose between two tracks and embark on a journey to discover more about the history and traditions of Israel's diverse ethnic communities.

■ **Track 1: Identity in Focus: Exploring Jewish and Israeli Heritage** - Beginning in the Jewish Art and Life wing, we'll make the connection between different cultural visions and representations of Judaism from around the world. Each artifact tells a story of its respective Jewish community, allowing you to deepen your understanding of different ethnic backgrounds and tie together ancient Jewish traditions with how they've lived on through the generations to this day. In the Israeli Permanent Art collection, we'll grapple with the struggle between two different identities - Jewish and Israeli - and begin to scratch the surface of the individual ties different artists, as well as each of us, have to these particular identities and what they mean for us as a people now and in the future.

■ **Track 2: Discover Nachlaot's Rich Heritage** - In the heart of downtown Jerusalem, Nachlaot's different colorful sections tell the stories of the original Jewish communities that settled here in the 19th century. Yemenite, Kurdish, Sephardi, Greek, and Galician Jews all called Nachlaot their home and each left imprints scattered around the neighborhood in courtyards, synagogues, and water cisterns. We'll take a walk through history as we explore this neighborhood's different cultural identities, understand the hardships these immigrants faced, and witness how the old and the new have evolved and intersected in Nachlaot over the years.

■ **Hummus Heaven: Lunch at Ben Sira** - Stop for a quick lunch at this iconic Jerusalem hummus joint. Enjoy hummus with fluffy pita, pickled vegetables, crispy falafel, and a cool glass of homemade lemonade. Ben Sira is known by locals as a hyper-authentic gathering place, reminiscent of food at mom's house on a Friday afternoon or meeting with friends to bond over the region's favorite comfort food. Did you know there is a Hebrew term for the particular way Israelis eat hummus? Lenagev means to swipe wipe up your hummus with a piece of pita. Dig in!

■ **OPTIONAL: Experience Jerusalem's Chanukah Magic** - You've likely never experienced Chanukah like this before. As the sun goes down, wander through the streets of Jerusalem and see the Hannukiah's proudly displayed in the windows and even outside of homes, lighting up the ancient streets and alleyways with the glow of over 2,000 years of Jewish spirit. Learn more about the holiday's traditions and the cultural and historic significance of the story of Chanukah while walking the streets where the Maccabees themselves fought for the liberation of the Jewish people.

■ **A Night of Lights!** - Our last night together is sure to shine as bright as the lights of the Chanukah candles! At this festive dinner, indulge in Chanukah treats traditionally fried in olive oil, like levivot (latkes), sufganiyot, and sfinj, tying together how different Jewish cultures celebrate the Festival of Lights. Try a bite of both traditional and artisanal sufganiyot stuffed with the traditional jelly filling and other modern, inventive flavors. Then, try your hand "gambling" at the interactive dreidel station. Together as a group, we'll light candles as we usher in the first night of Chanukah and celebrate the end of a successful trip with a night of dancing, live music, and special holiday surprises.

■ **Jerusalem - The Orient Hotel**

[object Object]

DAY 9 FORWARD PROGRESS FOR ISRAEL'S FUTURE

Friday, December 8

■ **Breakfast at your hotel & check out**

■ **Celebrating Inclusivity and Diversity at Beit Hagalgalim** - Our final session is at Beit Hagalgalim (House of Wheels), an organization that provides support and opportunities to children, youth, and young adults with disabilities from all backgrounds, creating a safe space for Jews, Arabs, Muslims, Christians, Bedouins, and others. Beit Hagalgalim organizes weekend getaways, summer camps, and sports clubs that are meant to engage those with disabilities and help them reach their full potential while offering constant encouragement. They also organize a "Rolling Experience," meant to show visitors what it's like to live a day in the life of people with disabilities, fostering a space for dialogue, connecting, and understanding.

■ **Group transfer to Ben Gurion Airport** - Fly back home, or transfer to Tel Aviv for those who planned to extend their trip.