

# Minneapolis Federation Family Adventure in Israel - December 2026

MINNEAPOLIS JEWISH FEDERATION



**9 Nights**

**DECEMBER 24, 2026 - JANUARY 02, 2027**

Join the Minneapolis Jewish Federation for an unforgettable 10-day family adventure in Israel! Experience sunrise at Masada, float in the Dead Sea, explore Jerusalem's Old City, savor local flavors, meet communities across the country, and welcome the New Year together

**via śabra**

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## Our team

### ABOUT US

We're a team of Israel-obsessed locals ready to take you on the trip of a lifetime around our exciting country. We aim to "unfold Israel" by immersing you in the experience of Israel. Hike a hidden trail, tour a historic site you've never heard of, taste unfamiliar flavors, meet someone who was born here and someone who immigrated – take it all in.

Become acquainted with contemporary Israel, its history, heritage, cuisine and culture.

And of course with the Via Sabra touch - the extra special care we devote to making every tour the best adventure of your life, at no extra charge, you'll find yourself transformed!

I invite you to join the Via Sabra community, discover Israel for yourself– and discover yourself!

*Avihai Tsabari*

**Avihai Tsabari**

CEO and founder of Via Sabra

# via śabṛa

# In a nutshell

## Minneapolis Federation Family Adventure in Israel - December 2026

DECEMBER 24, 2026 - JANUARY 02, 2027

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### Day 1

**Thu, 24 Dec 2026**

- Welcome to Israel (program starts midday)
- Coffee Cart on the way to Jerusalem
- Drive to Jerusalem
- Jerusalem Lookout
- Dinner in Jerusalem
- OPTIONAL - Night Christmas tour

### Day 2

**Fri, 25 Dec 2026**

- OPTION 1: City of David
- OPTION 2: Be an Archeologist at Ein Tzurim
- OPTION 3: Eden Tamir Music Center
- REGROUPING: The Western Wall Tunnels
- Machane Yehuda Market - Scavenger Hunt
- Back in the hotel and prepare for Shabbat!
- Dinner at the hotel - Erev Shabbat

### Day 3

**Sat, 26 Dec 2026**

- Morning services and shul hopping
- Lunch at the hotel (OPTIONAL)
- Old City Stroll
- Group Havdalah as we welcome our full week ahead!
- Dinner on your own

# In a nutshell

## Minneapolis Federation Family Adventure in Israel - December 2026

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### Day 4

**Sun, 27 Dec 2026**

- Head out of Jerusalem into the Jerusalem Hills
- Farm to Table - Nura at Mata
- Beit Guvrin - the Land of a Thousand Caves
- Continue south and head to Kfar HaNokdim for a full desert experience.
- The Desert Experience!!!

### Day 5

**Mon, 28 Dec 2026**

- Masada National Park (sunrise or 8AM tour)
- Floating on the Dead sea
- Continue north for 2 options:
- OPTION 1: Dead Sea Boat Ride Salty Landscapes
- OPTION 2: Einot Zukim (Ein Fescha and EZ Raider)
- Continue north

### Day 6

**Tue, 29 Dec 2026**

- Visit Safed
- Family Midrash at Hirbat Shama
- Galilean Cooking workshop with a Druze Family

### Day 7

**Wed, 30 Dec 2026**

- Akko historical tour
- Bahai Gardens Haifa lookout
- Holiday of Holidays in Haifa
- Drive to Tel Aviv, check in to the hotel
- Dinner & evening on own in Tel Aviv

# In a nutshell

## Minneapolis Federation Family Adventure in Israel - December 2026

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### Day 8

**Thu, 31 Dec 2026**

- Morning with the Rehovot Partnership
- Drive back to Tel Aviv
- Sarona tour
- Sarona Tunnels
- Special NYE Street Food Dinner Hopping!!!!

### Day 9

**Fri, 01 Jan 2027**

- ANU Museum of the Jewish People (morning visit)
- Carmel Market (Shuk HaCarmel) - on own
- Lunch on own
- Nachalat Binyamin Arts and Crafts Market
- Graffiti Workshop and tours - Murielle Street Art
- Welcome Shabbat with singing at sunset and enjoy dinner

### Day 10

**Sat, 02 Jan 2027**

- Local synagogue options
- Lunch at the hotel or on your own
- Morning touring options
- Special Shabbat afternoon group gathering
- Old Jaffa tour
- Final Farewell Dinner!
- Group transfer to airport for overnight flights
- Farewell



# Arrival & First Hugs with Jerusalem

## DAY 1 THURSDAY, 24 DECEMBER 2026

- **Welcome to Israel (program starts midday)** Shalom - welcome to Israel. Arrival at Ben Gurion Airport.
- **Coffee Cart on the way to Jerusalem** Discover Israel's vibrant coffee cart scene—mobile cafés in scenic spots, serving excellent local brews, community vibes, and spontaneous encounters that turn everyday landscapes into social gathering points.

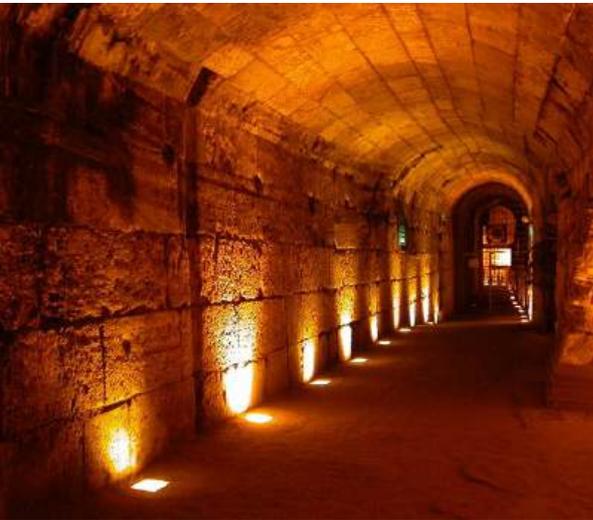
This is the "Israel Circle" - an activity where each family receives their Israel Starter Kit, including a map of Israel, an Israeli "Passport" (to stamp along the trip), Hebrew and English name tags, and a journal to keep track of the trip

- **Drive to Jerusalem**
- **Jerusalem Lookout** SheheChyanu and a welcome cocktail (and non-alcoholic for kids) with a panoramic view over Jerusalem.

Take a gentle orientation walk, stretch your legs, and let kids complete their first Israel Passport sticker.

- **Dinner in Jerusalem** In the evening, enjoy a lively welcome dinner with icebreaker games that connect the group.
- **OPTIONAL - Night Christmas tour** Night Christmas tour of the Old City of Jerusalem, mostly Christian Quarter.

**Overnight: Beit Shmuel, Jerusalem**



# The Old City Comes Alive

**DAY 2 FRIDAY, 25 DECEMBER 2026**

- **Breakfast at the hotel** After breakfast choose your track:
- **OPTION 1: City of David** Take a trip back in time through the layers of Jerusalem's past. It was on this hill where King David founded the Kingdom of Israel capital, and where it continuously excavated over the last 120 years, discoveries are regularly made. Tour the palace of King David, ritual purification pools, and the tour's highlight - a walk through water in Hezekiah's Tunnel built to protect the water supply. Exit the site onto the magnificent road where the Jewish pilgrims walked, over 2,000 years ago. Get your flashlights ready!  
Please note: The walk in the tunnel isn't suitable for claustrophobic people. What to bring? water shoes, a flashlight, shorts, and a change of modest clothes for the rest of the day in the Old City.
- **OPTION 2: Be an Archeologist at Ein Tzurim** Participate in sifting through archaeological-rich rubble from the Temple Mount. Learn from archaeologists and about the discoveries already made and take part in uncovering more of Jerusalem's glorious past.
- **OPTION 3: Eden Tamir Music Center** Nestled in historic Ein-Kerem in Jerusalem, the Eden Tamir Music Center hosts intimate chamber-music concerts—imagine a Saturday evening recital in a candle-lit room where world-class artistry meets warm local charm.
- **REGROUPING: The Western Wall Tunnels** Explore what's under the Muslim Quarter through the Kotel Tunnels Tour. The Western Wall is impressive, but its greatness is truly discovered when you descend underground to the Western Wall Tunnels. The tunnels run along approximately 488 meters (1601ft) of the Western Wall, giving visitors a taste of the challenge that stood before Herod the Great during the biggest of all his immense building projects - the expansion of the Temple Mount.
- **Machane Yehuda Market - Scavenger Hunt** In the heart of Jerusalem sits this bustling, multi-ethnic market bursting with life, art, and flavor. Immerse yourself in the world of Middle Eastern cuisine as you indulge in a tasting tour through Machane Yehuda Market. Learn about the market's rich history, and meet the vendors who bring this place to life, as you experience the vibrant energy unique to this iconic culinary destination.
- **Back in the hotel and prepare for Shabbat!** Prepare for Shabbat, with Kabbalat Shabbat overlooking the Old City Walls
- **Dinner at the hotel - Erev Shabbat** Candle lighting 16:01 (4:01pm)

**Overnight: Beit Shmuel, Jerusalem**

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# Shabbat Magic in Jerusalem

## DAY 3 SATURDAY, 26 DECEMBER 2026

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- **Breakfast at the hotel**
- **Morning services and shul hopping** In small groups discover Shabbat prayer in different synagogues across the city (or - just time to rest).
- **Lunch at the hotel (OPTIONAL)**
- **Old City Stroll** Including the Ramparts Walk on the walls of the city - walk through the Jewish Quarter, its alleys, and unique corners. This is an easy, light tour.
- **Group Havdalah as we welcome our full week ahead!** Havdalah at 5:27pm at Bimat Israel
- **Dinner on your own** Dinner on your own - enjoy an evening at leisure and dinner at a local restaurant, we will be happy to make restaurant recommendations and reservations. (meal and transfers are not included)

**Overnight: Beit Shmuel, Jerusalem**



## Get (RE)connected to Nature

### DAY 4 SUNDAY, 27 DECEMBER 2026

- **Breakfast at the hotel** Check out of the hotel and pack smart (for one night)
- **Head out of Jerusalem into the Jerusalem Hills**
- **Farm to Table - Nura at Mata** Connect to Israel's wilderness by foraging and a delicious meal - in Jerusalem hills meet Nurit Hertz in her backyard and walk into the forest. Become familiar with the local plants that grow in the Judean Hills, to identify edible plants, and learn how to use them for both medicine and food. Gather from the variety of plants and create a meal inspired by the food people have been eating here since ancient times.
- **Beit Guvrin - the Land of a Thousand Caves** To really dig deep into the past, head to Beit Guvrin-Maresha, in the heart of The Land of Thousands of Caves, where hundreds of caves were carved as part of a huge quarry, some of which are linked by underground tunnels. Explore the underground town from the Hellenistic period, where vast spaces were excavated beneath the houses and used as storerooms, olive presses, or even columbarium housing hundreds of pigeons. These caves later on were used as safe havens during the time of the Bar Kochba revolt against the Romans. Discover the amazing Bell Caves and don't miss out on a visit to the impressive Roman amphitheater.
- **Continue south and head to Kfar HaNokdim for a full desert experience.**
- **The Desert Experience!!!** Kfar Hanokdim is a green oasis shaded by palm trees and crowned with biblically inspired gardens where you will find a picturesque scene-Bedouin tents comfortably fitted with colorful rugs and mattresses. Kfar Hanokdim, surrounded by the breathtaking views of the Judean desert, offers relaxed desert hospitality, a real break from daily life. Guests visiting the Kfar enjoy warm Bedouin hospitality accompanied by explanations of Bedouin life and culture
  - Camel ride
  - Drummers circle
  - Bonfire
  - The Bedouin Feast

**Overnight: Kfar HaNokdim**



# From Desert Caves to Northern Springs

**DAY 5 MONDAY, 28 DECEMBER 2026**

- **Breakfast at Kfar HaNokdim (except the Masada sunrise hikers)**
- **Masada National Park (sunrise or 8AM tour)** Ascend the mountain by cable car to explore Masada, a natural fortress combining natural beauty and deep meaning. Explore the impressive excavations that reveal secrets of daily life in the fortress, hear about the scene of the epic stand by Jewish rebels at the end of the Great Revolt against Rome nearly 2,000 years ago, and how the site became one of Israel's most important symbols.
- **Floating on the Dead sea** Free time to float and enjoy (with black mud and a group photo!) at the Dead Sea, at the public beach.  
Lunch on own at public beach
- **Continue north for 2 options:**
- **OPTION 1: Dead Sea Boat Ride Salty Landscapes** Embark on an exclusive boat ride on the Dead Sea and sail to see a captivating 'salt-chimneys forest'. During this unique experience you will enjoy the wondrous muds, salt pearls, salt diamonds, water springs streaming to the sea and sink holes filled with sweet water. Learn about the ecosystem and the environmental issues connected to the Dead Sea.
- **OPTION 2: Einot Zukim (Ein Fescha and EZ Raider)** Ein Feshcha natural water springs, including the secret reserve, and ride the EZ riders through the Date groves.
- **Continue north** Continue north and check in at Nir David Kibbutz lodging  
Dinner at the Kibbutz and a relaxed evening with some family activities on site.

**Overnight: Nir David Kibbutz Lodging**



## Water, Mountains & Druze Hospitality

### DAY 6 TUESDAY, 29 DECEMBER 2026

- **Breakfast at the hotel** Enjoy the kibbutz public spaces and some outdoor games
- **Visit Safed** Safed, pronounced Tzfat in Hebrew, sits at a higher altitude than any other city in Israel and has been known since the 16th century as a major center of Kabbalah, Jewish mysticism. Tzfat's mystical aura adds to its special status as one of Israel's four holy cities, along with Jerusalem, Tiberias, and Hebron. The old synagogues, narrow alleyways and artists' studios add to the hilltop city's unmistakable charm.
  - Shofar making workshop
  - Mezuzah making workshop (wood and epoxy)
  - Safed Puzzle escape room
  - Time for shopping
  - Lunch on own
- **Family Midrash at Hirbat Shama** Made for families, finding your Jewish identity and connection to Israel through text and song
- **Galilean Cooking workshop with a Druze Family** Together with your hosts in their private home, prepare traditional Druze Galilean dishes and then enjoy a meal of the foods you learned to cook. Get to know your hosts and their culture and history. Hear about the strong bond between the Druze community to the State of Israel and their contribution to the IDF. Dinner is included.

**Overnight: Nir David Kibbutz Lodging**

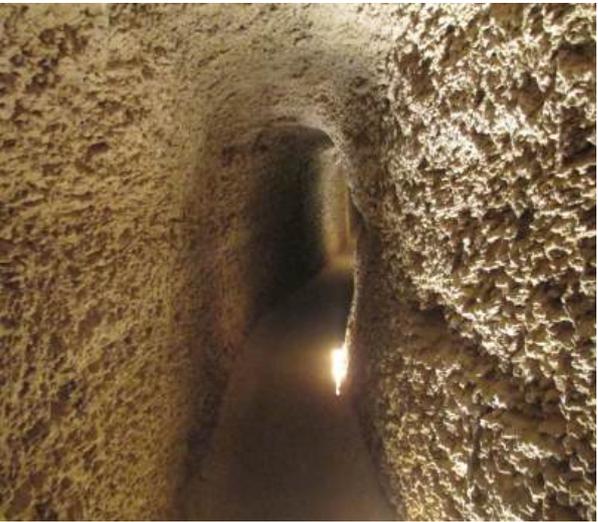


# Akko, Haifa & Tel Aviv Welcome (ish)

## DAY 7 WEDNESDAY, 30 DECEMBER 2026

- **Breakfast at the hotel** Check out of the hotel and head west
- **Akko historical tour** Walk through 4,000 years of history in this ancient city and UNESCO World Heritage site. The ancient city of Akko, situated on the Mediterranean coast, is one of the oldest ports in the world, and a city shared by Jews, Muslims and Christians. Discover the impressive subterranean well-preserved Crusaders Middle Ages city, walk narrow streets past towering ramparts, venerable synagogues, slender Muslim minarets, and secret passageways. Learn about the city's rich history, as well as its important role in Israel's modern history. Including lunch in Akko
- **Bahai Gardens Haifa lookout** A magnificent scenic lookout over the Baha'i Gardens and Haifa's Bay all the way to the border with Lebanon. Admire the garden's captivating terraces, gracefully cascading towards the Mediterranean Sea, while discovering the history of this sacred site and the principles of the Baha'i religion. Haifa's vibrant landscape unfolds a tapestry of cultures, religions, and historical layers.
- **Holiday of Holidays in Haifa** Experience Haifa's Holiday of Holidays festival, where Christmas, Hanukkah, and Eid unite in colorful streets filled with music, food, art, and a joyful celebration of coexistence and shared culture.
- **Drive to Tel Aviv, check in to the hotel**
- **Dinner & evening on own in Tel Aviv**

Overnight: Dan Panorama Tel Aviv



## DAY 8 THURSDAY, 31 DECEMBER 2026

- **Breakfast at the hotel**
- **Morning with the Rehovot Partnership** Start your morning with special programming with our partnership in Rehovot! - including lunch  
start the year off in a feel good way - with volunteering in our partnership city
- **Drive back to Tel Aviv**
- **Sarona tour** Sarona is a renovated complex in the heart of Tel Aviv, originally a German Templar Colony, the site sits at the heart of what is a new central business district of the city, with offices and apartments surrounding the beautifully landscaped complex, in which 33 original Templar buildings dating up to more than 140 years, have been painstakingly restored, and today house boutique stores, artist galleries, quaint cafes, and some of the city's hottest restaurants and bars.
- **Sarona Tunnels** The Sarona Tunnels in Tel Aviv offer a fascinating underground experience, connecting the city's vibrant Sarona Market with its historic German Templar Colony. Explore and discover hidden gems below the surface.
- **Special NYE Street Food Dinner Hopping!!!!**

Overnight: Dan Panorama Tel Aviv



# Social Impact & Shabbat by the Sea

**DAY 9 FRIDAY, 01 JANUARY 2027**

- **Breakfast at the hotel**
- **ANU Museum of the Jewish People (morning visit)** The newly re-imagined ANU Museum of the Jewish People tells the story of the Jewish people through the generations and up to the present time. Dive into this dynamic and interactive experience that represents all parts of the Jewish people and highlights the creative works and cultural riches of a variety of communities throughout different periods of history.
- **Carmel Market (Shuk HaCarmel) - on own** A culinary and cultural experience in the Carmel Market (Shuk HaCarmel), the largest market in Tel Aviv. Touring the market reveals the taste of the ages of Tel Aviv in the youthful atmosphere felt here. The Polish, the Persian, and the Yemeni...in this case, it is not the opening line of a joke, but the fascinating culinary traditions that mix in this place. Founded over 90 years ago, discover the many secrets, stories, and legends of this culinary destination.
- **Lunch on own**
- **Nachalat Binyamin Arts and Crafts Market** Enjoy time to explore the local artistic spirit in Nachalat Binyamin open-air market in the heart of Tel-Aviv. It has become synonymous with quality Israeli crafts and folk art. The market comprised over 100 stands representing specialty local crafts in virtually every medium imaginable: wood, stone, glass, ceramics, and various metals, all original and handmade. The unique architecture as well as the graffiti on the walls provide a perfect backdrop for the arts and crafts market.
- **Graffiti Workshop and tours - Murielle Street Art** With a local talented street artist tour the dynamic neighborhood of Florentin, Tel Aviv's most bohemian and upbeat neighborhood. Learn about contemporary Israeli culture through the graffiti on the walls and see an Israel that you might not know. Finally, express your creativity in an interactive fun graffiti workshop, and make something on your own that you'll take with you back home.
- **Welcome Shabbat with singing at sunset and enjoy dinner** Candle lighting 16:29 (4:29pm)

**Overnight: Dan Panorama Tel Aviv**

L'hitraot!



## Farewell Reflections

**DAY 10 SATURDAY, 02 JANUARY 2027**

- **Breakfast at the hotel**
- **Local synagogue options**
- **Lunch at the hotel or on your own**
- **Morning touring options** - Tour of Bialik street, and finish at Trumpeldor cemetery, to talk about the people that built this country - for a little Zionist narrative!
  - Independence Trail with visual aids to bring back to life the historical buildings and people.
- **Special Shabbat afternoon group gathering**
- **Old Jaffa tour** Explore the enchanting charm of Old Jaffa, where ancient and modern are situated side-by-side and where people of all faiths meet. Jaffa is one of the most ancient port cities in the Mediterranean basin. Visit Jaffa Port, which for centuries was the gateway to the Land of Israel. Today Jaffa is a mixed city, where Jews and Arabs live alongside each other.

Havdalah 17:28 (5:28pm)

- **Final Farewell Dinner!**
- **Group transfer to airport for overnight flights**
- **Farewell** We hope to host you again in our beautiful country!

# via šabra

Via Sabra gave us an Israel experience like no other. The bookings, the guides, where we went, everything was a joy, the perfect combination of touring, learning and fun.

Stephen K



Not only was the experience reflective of top-notch quality and superb attention to detail, you were treated like family.

Elizabeth



It was the most interesting, delicious, fun trip that we have ever had to Israel and quite frankly, anyplace! Our tour guide brought everything alive for us and filled our days with so many adventures. Cannot recommend this enough.

Ariel P

