

BEFORE YOU GO

Passport and Visa

1. Passports must be valid for at least 6 months behind the completion of your trip. Make sure your passport has enough blank visa pages available for entry and exit stamps.
2. U.S. Resident Aliens need both passport and Alien Resident Card for re-entry to the United States.
3. Traveling to Israel, entry visa is not required for U.S. passport holders for stays of 90 days or less. To find more information on visa to Israel, check the website of the Embassy of Israel to the United States:
<http://israelemb.org/washington/pages/default.aspx>.
4. Ritz Tours and our local land operator will assist our passengers with valid US passports enter Jordan via the international land border crossings. Passengers do not need to apply entry visa to Jordan prior to departure. Please note: if you purchase air tickets on your own and/or do not leave Jordan with the group will be required to provide flight information. Whether or not to pay the visa fee will be determined by the Immigration Office at Amman International Airport.
5. Carry emergency contact person's name, address and telephone number with you.
6. Keep travel documents, passport, personal necessities and valuables with you at all time. Leave a copy of the important documents to your family or pack another separately from the original itself. We suggest you scan and email a copy to yourself for easy online access. This will help speed up the replacement process.
7. Be sure you have all the necessary documents and money before leaving for the airport.

Consular Information

The U.S. Department of State provides Country Specific Information Sheets for every country in the world, as well as Travel Alerts and Warnings. Find this information by calling 888-407-4747 or 202-501-4444, or online at www.travel.state.gov.

Baggage

1. Baggage charges and insurance are at the owner's responsibility. Do not over pack, leave space for purchases on the tour. To avoid over-loading your suitcase, the less is the better.
2. Baggage allowance and restrictions varies by airline and airport, and is subject to change at any time. For up to date baggage allowance, restrictions, and fees, always check with your particular airline before traveling.
3. It is advised that all checked luggage has a lock (TSA approved combination locks are recommended) and **use Ritz Tours red luggage tags** showing your tour code, name, telephone number, and address.
4. DO NOT pack prescription medicine, valuables and other personal necessities in checked luggage. Keep them in your carry-on bag.
5. Consider including one night's essentials for whole family in one of the suitcases or in your carry-on bag to void inconvenience in case of loss or delayed flight.
6. Consult www.tsa.gov for information on TSA approved locks and U.S.A. luggage restrictions.

Health and Insurance

1. Travelers are strongly advised to purchase travel insurance prior to departure for your own protection.
2. It is important to familiarize yourself with any potential health issues or concerns related to your destination, and so we strongly recommend consulting the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for up-to-date information on required and recommended vaccines and medications. Visit them online at wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel or call 800-232-4636.
3. Plan to visit your doctor or local travel clinic at least 4-6 weeks before departure to allow time for any vaccinations to take effect or to fill any prescriptions. Consult your doctor for suggestions on prevention and treatment.
4. Carry prescription medication in original packaging, along with your doctor's prescription. Pack them in your hand luggage sufficient quantity for the duration of the trip.
5. In case of illness during **your** trip, please immediately notify your tour manager and local guide for assistance.

Weather

1. Israel: While the country is small – about the size of New Jersey – the weather and climates varies depending on your destination within Israel. You can expect hot dry summers nationwide from April to October and mild winters from November to March with somewhat drier, cooler weather in hilly regions, such as Jerusalem. Rainfall is relatively heavy in the north and center of the country, with much less in the southern areas.
2. Jordan: The climate in Jordan varies greatly. Generally, the further inland from the Mediterranean, greater contrasts in temperature occur and the less rainfall there is. Amman is sunny and cloudless from May to October, with average temperatures around 23C (73F). Springtime brings optimal weather, lush with greenery, and autumn equally mild and pleasant. July and August are hot and dry but not oppressive. Because of the capital city's elevation, evenings are cool, better to bring a jacket. In hot and dry areas such as Wadi Rum, the sandstorms happen some times. Visitors are strongly advised to bring protective eyewear, mask, and scarf.
3. Use a website such as www.weather.com to find average temperatures and rainfalls during your travel times.

Electricity

- The standard voltage in Israel is 230 V, 50 Hz, requiring European standard rounded two-prong plugs.
- Jordan is 220V and 50Hz. European standard rounded two-prong and three-prong plugs along with British square three-pin plugs are all used across the country.
- U.S. travelers are advised to bring voltage converter and international power plug adapter (transformer) for the trip.

Clothing and Things to Bring

1. **Casual Wear:** The day-to-day attire consists of really whatever you are comfortable wearing. T-shirts, tank tops, shorts, pants, sandals, and sneakers are completely acceptable.
2. **Sun hat:** Bringing a hat and sunglasses on this trip is a must, as it helps to prevent dehydration, heat strokes, and sunburns.
3. **Swimsuit:** Keep a swimsuit cover-up and slippers on hand for trips to the Dead Sea, Sea of Galilee, hotel pools and the beach.

- Sunscreen:** Sunscreen is very expensive in Israel, so be sure to pack enough for your entire trip! Small, portable sunscreen sticks can easily be carried in a pocket or purse and are convenient for reapplying throughout the day.
- Comfortable Walking Shoes:** Comfortable shoes with rubber soles are usually best, given the added grips ensures no accidental slips on smooth stone surfaces. Sandals or slip-on sneakers are recommended, as you'll be asked to remove them before entering places of worship.
- Religious Sites and Neighborhoods:** When visiting holy sites and religious neighborhoods, modest clothing is essential in respect for the sites and culture. These locations won't always permit entry to those that are not dressed modestly. For women, a skirt or trousers at least covering the knees, shoulders and elbows is required. Women might want to bring a wrap or shawl to cover yourself if you will be otherwise unsuitably dressed. At Jewish sites males must wear head covering - any kind will do.
- Other things we suggest you to bring: skincare lotion, light jacket, Insect-spray, swimming suit, slippers, mouth-muffle, first-aid kit, binoculars, aspirin, and over-counter medicine for flu, indigestion, motion sickness.

- Spanish are also spoken, but to a lesser extent.
- When traveling abroad, it is suggested to learn speaking a few basic local language, it will gain you respect from the locals and is a good way to break the ice.

Local Time

In winter, Israel and Jordan is 7 hours ahead of New York (U.S. EST), 10 hours ahead of Los Angeles and San Francisco (U.S. PST). During the summer, (Israel from April to September, Jordan from April to October), the clocks move one hour forward for daylight saving time.

Currency and Credit Cards

- Israel:** Israel currency is the 'shekel', abbreviated as either ILS, or more commonly NIS (New Israeli Shekel). There are four paper bank notes: 20, 50, 100 and 200 shekels, six coin denominations from 10 shekel to 10 agurot ("cent", 1 shekel=100 agurot). You can exchange money at banks, post offices, licensed currency exchange shops or hotels. It's also convenient to withdraw funds in local currency at ATM machines using your credit card. As of November 2021, the exchange rate is: 1 USD = 3.12 ILS.
- Jordan:** The currency in Jordan is the Jordanian Dinar (JD), which is divided into 100 piastres or 1,000 fils. Notes are in denominations of JD 50, 20, 10, 5 and 1. Coins come in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 25 and 50 piastres. It is easy to change foreign currency at banks, moneychanger or big hotels. Banks are closed on Fridays and Saturdays. ATMs are available in larger towns and at the airports. The maximum daily withdrawal amount is around JD 500, depending on your particular card. Check with your bank for information on ATM international fees. As of November 2021, the exchange rate is: 1 USD = 0.71 JOD.
- It is advised to inform your credit card company of your traveling and to confirm your credit line prior to departure.
- Credit cards, especially Visa and MasterCard are accepted widely in Israel and Jordan as the travelers' cheque is not so common. We suggest traveling with sufficient U.S. dollars to be exchanged for local currency for small payments in case ATMs cannot be accessed, are broken down or run out of cash.

WHEN YOU ARRIVE

Arrival Airport and Customs

- When you arrive in Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport, your Ritz's tour manager or local representative will greet you as you exit the **Passport Control** areas. Use Ritz Tours red badge and luggage tag. These brightly colored markers help us identify you and your luggage quickly.
- Arriving tourists are required, prior to landing at Israel, to fill out the L17 form for the registration of personal details. Keep this form with you, as you will need it when you leave the country. Duty free allowance to Israel: 200 cigarettes, 250g tobacco; 1 litres of spirits, 2 litres of wine, 250 ml of perfume for personal use; legal gifts valued up to 200 USD per person aged 18 and over. Drugs, firearms, raw meat, and counterfeit currency may not be brought into the country.
- When making the border crossing from Israel into Jordan, the lines tend to be long. Please be patient.
- Currency restrictions for entry and exit:

Israel: You must declare if you are carrying 50,000 shekels or more when entering or exiting Israel by air and 12,000 shekels if entering or exiting by land.

Jordan: Declaration is required for entry if greater than JOD 10,000 or the equivalent in other currencies.

Language

- Israel: Israel has one official language, Hebrew. Arabic is classified as having a 'special status in the state' with its use by state institutions to be set in law. Hebrew is the primary language of the state and is spoken every day by the majority of the population. English is widely spoken, as it may be seen in road signs and official documents.
- Jordan: The official language is Arabic, but English is widely spoken especially in the cities. French, German, Italian and

Food and Drink

- Tour fare does not include any drinks. During your stay in Israel and Jordan, it is advised to drink only bottle water and to avoid eating from street stalls.
- Israel cuisine incorporates many fantastic foods traditionally eaten in the Mediterranean, Arab, and Middle East. Be sure to try hummus, shakshuka, and the delicious falafel with pita bread and fresh salad. For the religious reason, many Israelis eat only kosher (food that conforms to Jewish dietary laws, such as no shellfish, no pork, and not mixing dairy and meat in a meal). Many restaurants are keeping kosher. Outside food or drink is not allowed to bring into the kosher restaurants.
- Jordan has culinary influences from the Middle East, Persia, and Mediterranean. Beyond hummus and falafel, in Jordan you may want to try the national dish - mansaf, a traditional Arab dish with rice and tender lamb or chicken. Muslims are prohibited from eating pork. Hotels generally have substitutes such as beef sausages and veal rashers on

their menus.

Shopping

1. Although the local guides will be happy to assist you with any shopping requirements, Ritz Tours does not assume responsibility for any items purchased at shops while on tour. You are never required to purchase any items while on tour and must be responsible for your own purchases. Any after sales correspondence must be between the passenger and the shop in question.
2. Bargaining is normal and expected when visiting any shuk (market). Restaurants, hotels and public transport almost always have fixed prices.
3. Popular Israeli souvenirs: Dates, diamonds, Dead Sea mineral products, handicrafts, Olive oil and wood carvings, Judaica and Jewish-themed products, Christian memorabilia.
4. Souvenirs to buy in Jordan: Sand Art in a Bottle, traditional scarves, locally made handicrafts, Arabic works, Dead Sea products.
5. It is travelers' responsibility to observe US Customs restrictions when bringing in any goods from tour. Consult the US Customs and Border Protection website at <http://www.cbp.gov> for details.

Culture and Photography

1. Shabbat: Every week, from Friday sunset to Saturday sunset, all public offices in Israel are closed on Shabbat, as are most private businesses. During Shabbat, public transportation (trains and buses) throughout the country ceases to operate, taxi service and non-Kosher restaurants are available. Radio and TV broadcasts operate as usual.
2. Israel and Jordan are both religious countries, please respect their culture and religion, and dress conservatively. When visiting churches and mosques, women should not wear anything short or sleeveless. Scarves will be the most useful items.
3. Do not take photographs of military installations or airports. Film is readily available in all tourist areas.
4. If you are taking photographs of local people, always ask their permission beforehand. Your guide can assist you in this.
5. It is advisable to carry your camera in a dust-proof bag. Photography or camera fees are applicable at most sights and museums; your guide can give you details of the latest charges.

Telephone and Internet Access

1. Israel international access code is 00, country code 972, Tel Aviv area code 03, Jerusalem area code 02; USA international access code 011, country code 1.
From Israel to USA, dial: 00 + 1 + Area code + Local number
From USA to Israel, dial: 011 + 972 + Area code + Local number
For U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem, you may visit the website: <https://jru.usconsulate.gov/> or call: +(972) (2) 622-7230.
2. Jordan international access code is 00, country code 962, Amman area code 6.
From USA to Amman, dial: 011 + 962 + 6 + Local number
For U.S. Embassy Amman, you may visit the website <https://jo.usembassy.gov/embassy/>, Tel: +(962) (6) 590-6000.
3. Generally WiFi can be found in most restaurants, hotels, cafes, malls and bars in major cities. Some hotels offer complimentary wireless internet services as well as business center, but some hotels don't. Consult the front

desk for specific details in each property.

4. Contact your cellular telephone provider to determine if your phone operates on the Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) and what, if any, activation may be required. If our phone is not GSM-enabled, you may find that renting a phone specifically designed for use overseas is the most practical option.

Tipping

Please note that gratuities are not included in your tour cost. Tipping is customary, and their purpose is to encourage and reward quality service. Our tour managers, local guides, drivers, hotel porters and other service personnel do their utmost to make your trip smooth and pleasant. Gratuities are a way of showing your appreciation and also constitute a large part of their monthly income. However, tips are NEVER mandatory. Ritz Tours suggests tipping in the following manner (per guest per day in USD):

- Tours' tour manager: US \$5
- Local guide: US \$5
- Driver: US \$2

Other Notes

1. Respect your tour guides, drivers, and other group members. Refrain from talking when tour guide is speaking.
2. Travelers' safety has always been our number one concern. For your safety, you should notify tour guide ahead of time if you plan to go out at night or roam at free time alone.
3. Always be cautious when staying at a hotel. Lock your door and never allow strangers into your room.
4. Keep an eye on your personal belongings and valuables at all time.
5. Floating in the Dead Sea is an awesome experience, but there are some things you should know for your own safety:
 - a. Do not wear jewelry in the water.
 - b. Do not shave for a few days before getting to Dead Sea as the salt in the water will make every scratch and cut burn.
 - c. Don't get salty water into your eyes as it will burn. If it happens accidentally, immediately rinse it with clean water.
 - d. Stay only in the designated area and don't stay in for too long.
6. Read carefully your itinerary and hotel information prior to the tour. Leave a copy to your family.
7. A nice and smooth trip counts on every group member's high cooperation. It is important to follow the indicated meeting time and meeting point. Use the red round name badge provided by Ritz tours for easy identification. To make your trip as enjoyable as possible, allow enough time for flight check-in, security screening and boarding: 2 hours for US domestic travel, 3 hours for international travel. For flight delay, cancellation, or any emergency, please contact Ritz Tours immediately:

Headquarters: (626)289-7777 (Mon-Fri)

After-hours (626)677-3415