

Israel and the Region's Geography



Map of the Middle East



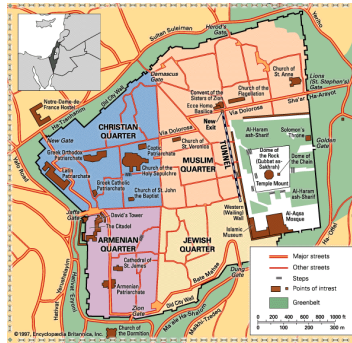
Map of Israel

Israel Inside:

- **Jerusalem:** Jerusalem is home to the Old City that is a melting pot of many cultures and religions. It is split into four quarters; the muslim quarter, home to the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the third holiest sight in Islam in which Muhhamad began his journey to heaven and the Dome of the Rock, which is located where the Second temple stood for Jews, and is allegedly where the binding of Isaac took place, the Armenian Quarter, the Christian Quarter, where the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is located, and the Jewish quater, the home to the holiest sight in the world for Jews, the Kotel, the last remaining wall of the Second Temple. The Old City is surrounded by seven open gates: the New Gate (leading to the Christian Quarter) , the Damascus Gate (leading to the Muslim Quarter), Herod's Gate (leading to the Muslim Quarter) , Lion's Gate, Dung Gate

(leading directly to the Western Wall Plaza) , Zion Gate (gate leading to the Jewish Quarter), and the Jaffa Gate (contains entrances to the Muslim, Armenian, and Christian Quarters). The Old City contains five sealed gates. The Sha'ar HaRachamim or the Golden Gate, as it is called in Christian literature, is said in Jewish tradition, that it will open when Moshiach comes, and 'he' will walk through it into the Old City. The other sealed gates include the Excavators Gate, Tanner's Gate, the Hadulah Gates and Single Gate. On the other side of the 12 gates lies the 'new city' of Jerusalem. This part of Jerusalem is modern and bustling. It has a Middle Eastern, European and American feel all rolled into one. Some highlights include the bustling Mamilla Mall, colorful Machane Yehuda, and Ben Yehuda Street (in which you will probably run into

someone you know.)



- Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv is a modern and bustling metropolis located along the medterannian sea. Tel Aviv is where many of the major corporations and startup offices are located. It is a very progressive city and hosts the only LGBTQIA+ pride parade in the Middle East. Most of the inhabitants of Tel Aviv are secular Jews. Tel Aviv is also well known for its



nightlife, beach culture and street art.



- Jaffa: Jaffa is an ancient port city in Israel in which many biblical stories have taken place including the story of Jonah and the Whale. Jaffa is a city in which Jews and Arabs coexist and live together. Jaffa is heavily influenced by Arab culture.



- Ashdod: Ashdod is the largest port city in Israel, as 60% of Israel's important goods come into Ashdod. Ashdod is located in the Southern District of Israel and is situated on the Medetranian Sea. Ashdod is known for its large population of Israelis from the former Soviet Union. One third of Ashdod's population is religiously observant, and

95% of the population of Ashdod identifies as Jewish.



- Haifa: Haifa is a city that is very religiously and culturally diverse. Haifa is the third largest city in Israel. 82% of the population consists of Israeli Jews, 10% of the population consists of Arabs and there also contains some small communities of Bahai and Druze people. Haifa is most famously home to the Bahai Temple or Shrine of the Baab, located on Mount Carmel, which is the holiest place in the world for Baha'is.



- Eilat: Eilat is the Southernmost city in Israel. It contains a mostly secular population and is known for its vibrant nightlife and party atmosphere and marine life and scuba/snorkel opportunities. Eilat is a busy port city and popular resort and tourist



location.

- Safed: Safed is a deeply religious and Kabbalistic and spiritual town. It consists of a very religious population, many of which are invested in the teachings of Chassidim and Jewish Mysticism. Safed is home to many beautiful synagogues. It is an artist colony known for its beautiful paintings and jewelry. Safed is also known for its blue

doors and accents throughout the city that symbolize closeness to heaven.



- Tiberias: Tiberias is a religiously diverse ancient city that holds historical significance to both Jews and Christians. Most notably to Jews, Tiberias is home to the Tomb of Maimonides (Rambam). Tiberias is a Northern city located along the Sea of Galilee.
- Beersheba: Beersheba is the capital of the Negev desert and is a manifestation of Ben Gurion's dream to make the Negev Bloom. Beersheba is the fourth most populated



metropolitan area in Israel.

- Acco: Acco is a port city on the Mediterranean, in which Arabs and Jews coexist. It is most well known for the citadel that was transformed into a British prison, the Great Mosque and the winding shuk (marketplace).





Map of the West Bank



Israeli- West Bank Barrier

The West Bank:

- Hebron: Hebron is one of the most disputed cities in the West Bank. For Jews it is significant because it is where the tomb of the patriarchs are located. For muslims it is

also holy for this reason, and is believed by some to be a part of Muhhamed's journey. It is one of the four holy cities of the Muslim faith. 80% of Hebron is located in Area A, which means it is governed by the Palestinian authority.



- Bethlehem Bethlehem is a city in the West Bank in which it is said that Jesus was born. This is a very significant location for Christians all over the world. Bethlehem is located in Area A of the West Bank and is governed by the Palestinian Authority.



- Ramallah: Ramallah is a Palestinian city that is located in Area A of the West Bank. It serves as the administrative capital of the West Bank and has a population of around

35,000 people.



- Nablus: Nablus is a Palestinian city located in Area A of the West Bank. It has a population of over 200,000 people and is 49 Kilometers North of Jerusalem.



- Jericho : Jericho is located in Area A of the West Bank is governed by the Palestinian Authority. Jericho has a population of 20,000 people and is located in the Jordan



Valley.

- Gush Etzion: Gush Etzion is a cluster of highly controversial Jewish settlements located in the Judean mountains directly south of Bethlehem and Jerusalem. While many Jews feel that they have a political or religious right to the land, and enjoy the cheap real estate pricing, Palestinians feel that it is an unethical evasion of the little land that



they have.

- Nazareth: Nazareth is a city located in the Lower Galilee in which Jesus is said to have spent the majority of his childhood. Christians from all over the world visit Nazareth.



Gaza: Gaza is a self governing Palestinian territory that is located on the Eastern coast of the Medeterainian Sea and borders Egypt. Gaza is governed by Hamas which up until recently has been in staunch opposition with the Palestinian Authority. Gaza has a population of around 1.8 million people consisting of nearly 100% Palestinians.



The Golan Heights: Israel captured the Golan Heights in 1967 from Israel. The Golan is one of the most highly disputed areas in Israel, and is one of the biggest barriers of peace between Israel and Syria. The Golan Heights is a highly strategic location as its elevation allows for Syria's capital to be visible by Israeli Soldiers. More than half of the Golan Heights population consists of non Jews and the Golan contains a large Druze community.



The Negev Desert: The Negev Desert is the largest desert in Israel. The Negev Desert is home to some of the largest Beduine communities in Israel. It also contains animals such as domesticated camels, Ibex, Caracal, and the Arabian Leopard. The Negev has the hottest temperatures in Israel, and it can sometimes get even hotter than 120 degrees fahrenheit in the summer.



The Sea of Galilee: The Sea of Galilee or Kinneret is where the majority of Israel's drinking water comes from. It is also a biblically significant event for Christians, and is a major pilgrimage site for Christians from all over the world.

Masada: Masada was King Herod's fortress during the Roman Empire and was where the siege of Masada occurred. Masada contains the snake path and roman ramp in which many people hike up to the top. It also contains cable cars and is a major tourist attraction and is a recognized World Heritage Site.



The Dead Sea: The Dead Sea is a major tourist attraction that is partially located in the West Bank of Israel. It is a saltwater lake that is the lowest point on Earth. Due to the high density of the water people can float in the sea. The minerals found in the dead sea have created a worldwide cosmetic and skin care market based out of Israel. The sea gets its name from the inability for life to sustain itself in the salty and harsh waters.

