

City of David Tour Jerusalem

📍 City of David, City of David, Jerusalem



Go beneath Jerusalem. This City of David tour Jerusalem takes you underground to the original 3,000-year-old settlement where King David established the capital of Israel, now buried beneath the modern city and still being excavated today.

The City of David tour Jerusalem starts above ground with a panoramic view from Mount Scopus, then guides you through the Old City's Jewish Quarter to the Western Wall before descending into the archaeological site that rewrites what we know about ancient Jerusalem.

Underground, walk through tunnels carved from solid rock over 2,700 years ago during the reign of King Hezekiah. See the [Gihon Spring](#) water system that sustained Jerusalem for a millennium, including through sieges. Stand in Warren's Shaft, discovered in 1867 by Captain Charles Warren, where ancient tunnels intersect and the engineering genius of the biblical era becomes tangible. Above ground, the City of David tour Jerusalem also takes you through the Armenian Quarter with its colorful ceramics, the excavated Byzantine-era Cardo, the Spanish Synagogues, and the sacred [Western Wall](#) where you can place a prayer note between stones that have stood for over 2,000 years. This City of David tour Jerusalem operates on Mondays and Thursdays with hotel pickup from Tel Aviv or Jerusalem. The underground tunnel portion requires a minimum of 2 participants. English-speaking guide throughout.

Tour Facts

Group Size:
50

Language:
English

Duration:
10

Tour Type:
continuous

Tour Itinerary

06:40 AM : Hotel Pickup

Your City of David tour Jerusalem begins with pickup from your hotel or a central meeting point. Pickup times vary by city: Tel Aviv approximately 06:40 AM, Jerusalem approximately 07:50 AM. Board the air-conditioned bus and head to Jerusalem.

08:30 AM : Mount Scopus Panorama

The City of David tour Jerusalem starts with a breathtaking overview from Mount Scopus. Look down on the 3,000-year-old Jewish cemetery on the slope of the Mount of Olives, the Kidron Valley below, and the Old City beyond. Your guide identifies the Temple Mount with the golden Dome of the Rock, the Old City walls, the Garden of Gethsemane, and the Church of All Nations. This elevated vantage point puts the geography of Jerusalem into perspective before you descend into it.

Duration
20 Minutes

08:50 AM : Kidron Valley Tombs

The bus descends past the Kidron Valley, where monumental Jewish burial tombs from the Second Temple period stand carved into the rock face. See the Tomb of Absalom (1st century CE pillar tomb), the Tomb of Bene Hezir (priestly family burial cave), and the Tomb of Zechariah. Your guide explains the funerary traditions of Second Temple Jerusalem. (Drive-by with Guide Commentary)

Duration
15 Minutes

09:05 AM : Enter the Old City via Zion Gate

The City of David tour Jerusalem enters the 500-year-old walls of the Old City through the Zion Gate, one of eight gates in the Ottoman-era fortifications. Pass into the Armenian Quarter, where your guide points out the brightly colored handmade ceramics, ancient monasteries, and the distinctive culture of this small but significant community that has been in Jerusalem since the 4th century.

Duration
15 Minutes

09:20 AM : Jewish Quarter: Byzantine Cardo

Enter the Jewish Quarter and walk along the excavated Byzantine-era Cardo, the grand colonnaded main street of 6th-century Jerusalem. Massive stone columns and the original paving are preserved beneath a modern shopping arcade. Your guide shows you how the Crusaders later built shops along this route, and how the street functioned as the commercial heart of the city for over a thousand years. Modern stores now occupy the same spaces where merchants traded 1,500 years ago.

Duration
20 Minutes

09:40 AM : Spanish Synagogues

The City of David tour Jerusalem visits the four beautifully restored Sephardi synagogues in the Jewish Quarter. These 17th and 18th-century synagogues were used as animal stables during the 19 years of Jordanian occupation (1948-1967) and have been painstakingly restored to their original elegance. The Yochanan ben Zakai Synagogue and the Istanbuli Synagogue are the most impressive. Your guide explains the history of Jerusalem's Sephardi Jewish community.

Note: If the Spanish Synagogues are closed, the tour visits the Hurva Synagogue instead, a stunning 19th-century synagogue destroyed and rebuilt twice.

Duration
20 Minutes

10:00 AM : Hezekiah's Wall

See the excavated and exposed foundation of the 2,700-year-old Broad Wall, built by King Hezekiah in the 8th century BCE to fortify Jerusalem against the approaching Assyrian army (Isaiah 22:10). This massive stone wall, discovered during excavations in the Jewish Quarter, is one of the most significant archaeological finds in Jerusalem, confirming the biblical account of Hezekiah's defensive preparations.

Duration
10 Minutes

10:10 AM : The Western Wall (Kotel)

The City of David tour Jerusalem arrives at the most sacred site in Judaism. The Western Wall is the last surviving retaining wall of the Second Temple, destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE. Jews from around the

world come to pray here and place written prayers between the ancient stones. Your guide provides historical context: how Herod the Great expanded the Temple Mount, how the wall survived 2,000 years, and why it holds such deep significance.

Take time to approach the wall, place a prayer note if you wish, and absorb the atmosphere of this extraordinary place.

Duration
30 Minutes

10:40 AM : Exit via Dung Gate, Enter the City of David

Leave the Old City through the Dung Gate and walk to the [City of David National Park](#), located just south of the Temple Mount walls. This is the original Jerusalem settlement where King David established his capital around 1004 BCE. Ongoing archaeological excavations have been uncovering this buried city since 1860, and new discoveries are still being made.

Duration
10 Minutes

10:50 AM : City of David Visitor Center and 3D Movie

Start at the visitor center with an immersive 3D movie that takes you back 3,800 years through Jerusalem's layers of history. The film illustrates how the city was built, destroyed, rebuilt, and conquered repeatedly over millennia, with excavated artifacts and structures from each period brought to life.

Duration
20 Minutes

11:10 AM : City of David Archaeological Excavations

The City of David tour Jerusalem takes you through the excavated remains of the original settlement. See structures from the Bronze and Iron Ages, including what archaeologists believe to be remnants of David's Palace. Your guide walks you through layers of history visible in the exposed stone walls: Canaanite, Israelite, Babylonian, Persian, Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine layers stacked on top of each other.

Duration
30 Minutes

11:40 AM : Underground Water Tunnels and Gihon Spring

The highlight of the City of David tour Jerusalem. Descend underground to the ancient water system that sustained the city for over 1,000 years. The Gihon Spring was Jerusalem's primary water source, and the ingenious tunnel system carved through solid rock brought water from outside the city walls to inside, even during enemy sieges.

Warren's Shaft: Named after Captain Charles Warren who rediscovered it in 1867, this vertical shaft connects to a network of tunnels that date back to the Canaanite period (over 3,000 years ago).

Hezekiah's Tunnel (dry route): Walk through the Canaanite channel, the dry alternative that parallels Hezekiah's famous water tunnel. The tunnel was modified over centuries and used until King Hezekiah sealed it and constructed his own tunnel to redirect water to the Pool of Siloam inside the city walls during the Assyrian siege (2 Kings 20:20).

Your guide explains the engineering marvel: using the natural gradient of the terrain, ancient workers carved the tunnel from two ends simultaneously and met in the middle, a feat of precision engineering that is still studied by archaeologists today.

Duration

40 Minutes

12:20 PM : Pool of Siloam

Exit the tunnels at the Pool of Siloam, where King Herod later built a massive ritual bath for Jewish pilgrims purifying themselves before ascending to the Temple. In the New Testament, this is where Jesus healed a blind man (John 9:1-11). Archaeological work continues here, uncovering the Herodian-era Pilgrims' Road that connected the pool to the Temple Mount.

Optional: Take a shuttle back to the City of David entrance (7 NIS) or walk back along the promenade.

Duration

15 Minutes

12:45 PM : Free Time for Lunch

Break for lunch at your own expense. Options in the Jewish Quarter and near the Old City gates (budget 50-80 NIS).

Duration

45 Minutes

13:30 PM : Depart Jerusalem

Board the bus for the return drive to your pickup city.

If this tour inspired you, explore more of Jerusalem with our [Jerusalem Full Day Tour](#) covering the broader Old City, or our [Christian Jerusalem Tour](#) for New Testament sites. For a full day combining archaeology and nature, our [Masada and Dead Sea tour](#) visits Herod's fortress and the lowest place on earth.

Duration
2 Hours

15:30 PM : Drop-off at Your Hotel

Return to your hotel or central drop-off point in your pickup city.