

Temple Mount and Dome of the Rock Tour

📍 Temple Mount, Jerusalem



Step onto the most contested sacred ground on earth. This Temple Mount tour Jerusalem takes you inside the 37-acre compound where Solomon's Temple and Herod's Second Temple once stood, and where the golden Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque stand today. It is the holiest site in Judaism, the third holiest in Islam, and deeply significant to Christianity.

Most Jerusalem tours view Temple Mount from a distance. This Temple Mount tour Jerusalem actually takes you through the security checkpoint and onto the elevated plaza itself. Walk among structures that span 3,000 years of history: the Dome of the Rock (692 CE), Al-Aqsa Mosque, the Golden Gate, the Scale Arches, the Dome of the Chain, and remnants that may date to the Hasmonean period.

The Temple Mount tour Jerusalem starts with a panoramic view from the [Mount of Olives](#), looking across the Kidron Valley to the Old City and the golden dome. Descend on foot past 2,000-year-old monumental tombs, enter the Old City through the Dung Gate, and proceed to the Temple Mount compound.

After Temple Mount, the tour visits the [Davidson Center](#), an archaeological park flanking the southern and western walls of the mount. Here you see excavated architectural elements from both the First and Second Temple periods, including original Herodian stones toppled during the Roman destruction in 70 CE.

This Temple Mount tour Jerusalem operates on **Wednesdays only** with hotel pickup from Tel Aviv or Jerusalem. English-speaking guide throughout. Important: Temple Mount access is subject to security conditions. If the compound is closed to visitors on the day of your tour, the itinerary substitutes the Tower of David Museum instead.

Tour Facts

Group Size:

50

Duration:

10

Language:

English

Tour Type:

continuous

Tour Itinerary

06:40 AM : Hotel Pickup

Your Temple Mount 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.

08:30 AM : Mount of Olives Panorama

The Temple Mount tour Jerusalem starts at the summit of the Mount of Olives with one of the most photographed views in the world. Look across the Kidron Valley to the Old City walls and the golden Dome of the Rock gleaming on Temple Mount. Your guide identifies the landmarks: the 3,000-year-old Jewish cemetery covering the slope below (approximately 150,000 graves), the Garden of Gethsemane, the Church of All Nations, and the various churches dotting the mount.

Your guide explains the profound significance of this vantage point. In Jewish tradition, the Messiah will appear on the Mount of Olives on the Day of Judgment, and the resurrection of the dead will begin here. In Christian tradition, Jesus wept over Jerusalem from this spot and later ascended to heaven. In Islamic tradition, a great chain will stretch from the Mount of Olives to Temple Mount on the Day of Judgment.

Duration
30 Minutes

09:00 AM : Descent Through the Kidron Valley

The Temple Mount tour Jerusalem descends the Mount of Olives on foot, passing churches and the ancient Jewish cemetery. In the Kidron Valley, see three monumental 1st-century tombs carved from the rock face: the Tomb of Absalom (a striking pillar tomb), the Tomb of Benei Hezir (a priestly family burial cave with Doric columns), and the Tomb of Zechariah (a pyramid-topped monument). The Kidron Valley is mentioned in the Torah as the route King David took when fleeing from Absalom (2 Samuel 15:23).

Duration
30 Minutes

09:30 AM : Enter the Old City via the Dung Gate

Pass through the 16th-century Dung Gate, the closest gate to the Temple Mount and the Western Wall. Your guide provides historical context about the Old City walls, built by Suleiman the Magnificent in the 1530s, and the eight gates that provide access.

Duration
10 Minutes

09:40 AM : Temple Mount (Haram al-Sharif)

The centerpiece of the Temple Mount tour Jerusalem. Enter the Temple Mount compound through the

Bab al-Magharibeh Gate (the only entrance for non-Muslims) after passing through a strict security checkpoint.

Important rules for Temple Mount:

- No religious objects of any kind are permitted (no Bibles, prayer books, rosaries, or religious symbols)
- No weapons of any kind
- Modest dress is mandatory (covered knees and shoulders)
- Non-Muslims may not pray on the compound
- The interior of the Dome of the Rock is for Muslims only (exterior viewing is permitted)
- Photography is permitted on the plaza but not inside mosques
- Follow all instructions from your guide and security personnel

Once inside, walk the vast 37-acre plaza. Your guide explains the layers of history beneath your feet. This is where the First Temple (Solomon's Temple, c. 957-586 BCE) stood until Nebuchadnezzar destroyed it. The Second Temple was built in 516 BCE, massively expanded by King Herod starting in 20 BCE, and destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE.

The Dome of the Rock: The iconic octagonal shrine with its golden dome, completed in 692 CE by Caliph Abd al-Malik. It is one of the oldest surviving Islamic monuments in the world. The shrine covers the Foundation Stone (Sakhra), which Jewish tradition identifies as the place where Abraham prepared to sacrifice Isaac, the heart of the Holy Temple, and the place where God created the world. Islamic tradition holds this is where Prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven during the Night Journey.

Al-Aqsa Mosque: The large silver-domed mosque on the southern end of the compound, revered as the third holiest site in Islam. Associated with Muhammad's Night Journey to "the Furthest Mosque" (al-masjid al-aqsa).

Other structures: The Golden Gate (sealed, believed by Jews to be where the Messiah will enter), the Dome of the Chain, the Dome of the Prophet, the Scale Arches, ancient fountains, prayer niches, and the Islamic Museum. Your guide explains the current status quo agreement that governs this sensitive site.

Duration
1 Hour

10:40 AM : Davidson Center Archaeological Park

Exit Temple Mount and walk to the Davidson Center, located along the southern and western walls of the mount. This Temple Mount tour Jerusalem continues with an archaeological exploration of what remains from the Temple periods.

See the original Herodian stones that were toppled from the top of the Temple Mount walls when the Romans destroyed the Second Temple in 70 CE. These massive carved stones lie exactly where they fell nearly 2,000 years ago. Examine the remains of Robinson's Arch, a monumental staircase that once led up to the Temple. Walk along the excavated southern wall and see the Hulda Gates, the original pilgrim entrances to the Temple.

Inside the Davidson Center Museum, exhibits display artifacts from the First and Second Temple periods, including pottery, coins, stone vessels, and architectural fragments. An interactive virtual reconstruction shows how the Temple Mount and Second Temple looked in their glory.

Duration
45 Minutes

11:25 AM : Free Time for Lunch and Exploration

Break for lunch at your own expense in the Old City (budget 50-80 NIS). Your guide recommends options. You may also use free time to visit the nearby Western Wall plaza, walk through the Jewish or Muslim Quarters, or browse the Old City markets.

Duration
1 Hour

12:30 PM : Depart Jerusalem

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

If this tour inspired you, explore underground Jerusalem with our [City of David tour](#), visit Christian holy sites with our [Christian Jerusalem Tour](#), or see the broader Old City highlights with our [Jerusalem Full Day Tour](#). For a completely different experience, add a [Masada and Dead Sea tour](#) on another day.

Duration
2 Hours

14:30 PM : Drop-off at Your Hotel

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