



Into the Heart of Israel with TRAVEX

Dear Friends,

I've recently returned from the most spectacular trip to Israel with the consummate experts in their country, TRAVEX. The Rebecca Recommends team was already abundantly impressed by the engaging, bespoke experiences of which TRAVEX is possible, but we had yet to experience one for ourselves. My colleague and friend Carol Kennedy joined me, as well as five luxury travel advisors, for a life-changing, week-long trip at the beginning of December 2021 that will forever rank as one of my favorite journeys.

TRAVEX puts its contagious enthusiasm for Israel into planning tailored journeys that capture the energy and spirit of the country. Everywhere we turned, we were treated to authentic, immersive experiences that highlighted the ancient ruins, diverse people, sacred holy sites, dramatic landscapes and gourmet cuisine of the region. While I could wax poetic about the trip for hours, I'll

leave you to read about our most outstanding moments - as well as a few first-hand testimonials from those who joined me in Israel.

A note about safety: Often, when I speak of traveling to Israel with advisors or friends, they express their concern about feeling safe in the country. I've always found Israel to feel incredibly safe, a place where I feel at ease throughout my travels. As a woman, I could walk alone late at night in Jerusalem or Tel Aviv - not even something I would feel comfortable doing in most US cities.

Exploring Israel is truly the trip of a lifetime and one that deserves to be captured on film. We were fortunate enough to have had our own professional photographer along with us for our first full day in Jerusalem and at the Dead Sea and Masala. Take a look (below) at native Israeli Oren Cohen's incredible photography of those days, representative of his pride and passion for his country.

Fondly,

Rebecca



Rebecca with Miri Hoss from Travex & Carol Kennedy, Rebecca Recommends

Now, read on ... and be in touch so that we may introduce you to our friends at TRAVEX for your own planning purposes.



The ancient limestone Wailing Wall in the Old City of Jerusalem.

Our favorite moments from our December 2021 Israel FAM trip with TRAVEX:

A Day in the Old City of Jerusalem

- Stunning vistas from the Mount of Olives, walking down Palm Sunday Road to the Garden of Gethsemane and strolling through ancient olive trees to the Church of All Nations.
- Entering the Christian Quarter of the Old City through St. Stephen's Gate and experiencing the Church of St. Anne and the Pools of Bethesda.



- Visiting the cavernous Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which some traditions believe is the site of the crucifixion and Tomb of Jesus.

- Taking a behind-the-scenes VIP tour in the City of David to the excavations of the Pilgrim's Road (not yet open to the public).

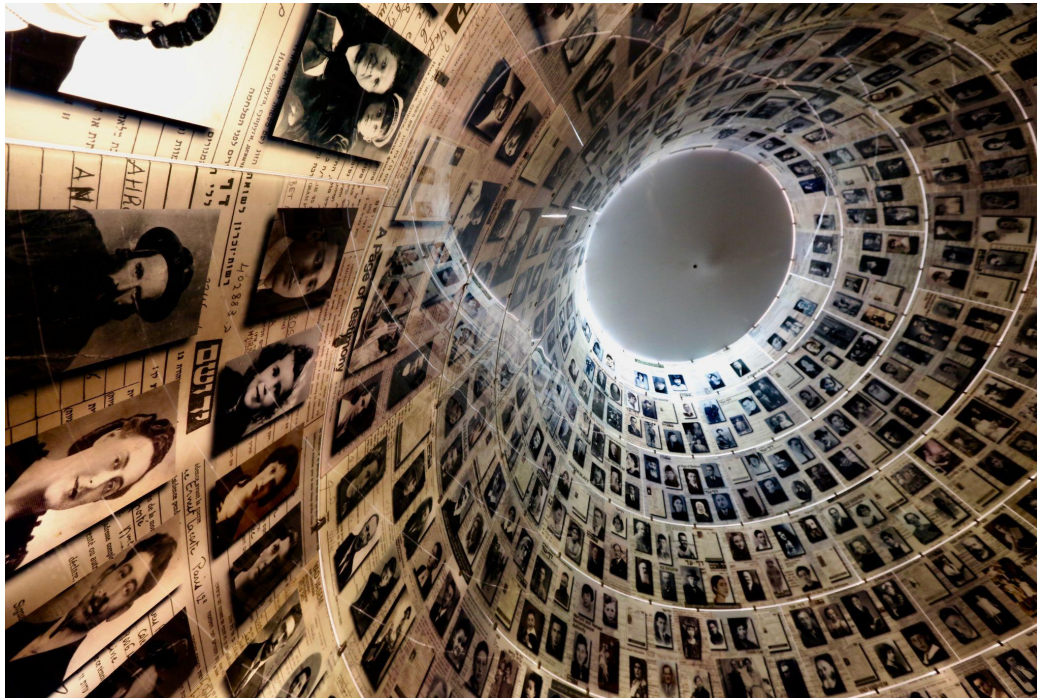




- Joining a rabbi in his historic home for a Hanukkah Menorah lighting.



The Holocaust Museum, Yad Vashem and the wreath-laying at the Avenue of the Righteous Among Nations



- Sharing in a meaningful, privately escorted visit to Yad Vashem, Israel's official Holocaust Memorial, dedicated to the memory of the victims and honoring the survivors.



- Pausing at the moving Children’s Memorial and the wreath-laying at the inspirational Avenue of the Righteous Among the Nations.

The Israel Museum

- A day at the Israel Museum, the country’s national gallery, exploring the compound, including the Model of Jerusalem from the Second Temple Period and the fascinating Dead Sea Scrolls exhibited in the Shrine of the Book.



Enjoy a virtual shopping trip to Machane Yehuda open-air market - [Travax Market Video](#)

Private culinary tour in Machane Yehuda open-air market

- The opportunity to be guided by a local Israeli chef around the colorful Machane Yehuda open-air market tasting the finest ingredients that were then incorporated into our own private lunch.



Escorted visit to Bethlehem

- A moving visit with TRAVEX's own local Bethlehem guide, to the birthplace of Jesus, where we visited the Manager Square and the Church of the Nativity.

The Dead Sea and Masada



- Experiencing the therapeutic qualities and healing powers of the Dead Sea at a day-use resort hotel and enjoying a lovely lunch.



- Arriving at King Herod's mountain-top fortress of Masada, the last stronghold of the Zealots against Rome, and ascending by cable car.



Private boat experience on the Sea of Galilee

- A spiritual adventure boating on the Sea of Galilee, feeling what sailing and fishing was like in the time of Jesus.
- Touring the Christian sites around the Sea of Galilee, including Capernaum, Tabgha - site of the Miracle of Loaves and Fishes - and the Mount of Beatitudes - site of the Sermon on the Mount.



Winery visit and off-road jeep ride in the Golan Heights

- Ascending to the Golan Heights for an overview of the region from the top of Mount Bental and visiting a boutique winery to hear stories and enjoy a variety of local wines.
- An exciting off-road jeep ride with a local specialist who shared perspectives about life in the Golan and the significance of the region.

Traditional Shabbat dinner in art-collector's home

- Enjoying a traditional Friday night Shabbat dinner with Israelis in their home, for a unique experience of ancient traditions still very much alive today.

Home visit in a Druze village

- Visiting a Druze village to hear the story of this minority population with secretive traditions, while savoring some of their traditional foods.

The excavations of the port city of Caesarea

- Walking through the excavations of Caesarea, featuring the ancient Roman theater, hippodrome and aqueduct.



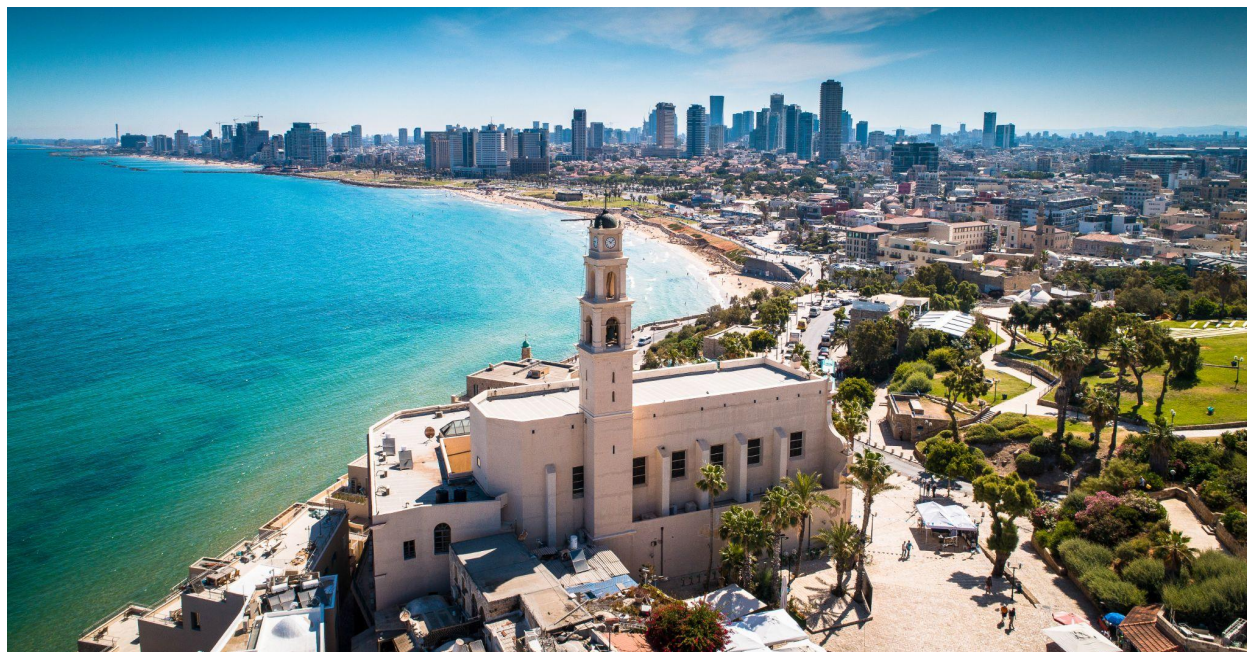


Bar crawl in Tel Aviv with nightlife expert

- A night experiencing Tel Aviv's world-famous, bustling nightlife, hitting the hard-to-find hidden spots where the locals hang out.

Street art tour of Tel Aviv with special guide

- Experiencing the Tel Aviv art scene during a private tour where we heard local stories and saw the walls that have become the vibrant canvases to local graffiti artists.
- Seeing Neve Tzedek, Tel Aviv's newest hip neighborhood where the intellectual elite lived during Israel's early days.



Shopping in Old Jaffa

- Meandering through the alleys of Old Jaffa, one of the oldest biblical cities in the world and an important seaport since antiquity.
- Discovering treasures in Old Jaffa's art galleries, boutiques and lively flea market.

Here's what those fortunate enough to be on the TRAVEX fam trip had to say about the experience:

- “Rebecca and I just returned from 8 incredible, life-changing days in Israel with TRAVEX, where they exceeded our expectations every day in every way. Their experience shows in everything they do - from their close relationships with management at the best hotels in Israel to their bespoke experiences throughout the country with guides and local experts who are so knowledgeable, but also very warm and personable. Their attention to detail is superb.” (Carol Kennedy, Rebecca Recommends)
- My experience was out of the ordinary. Everything was well planned and organized and TRAVEX was incredibly responsive to our needs and requests. The thought and care that went into the planning was evident. I came back with much more insight into the country of Israel and its people.
- This trip was such a blessing for me in many ways and I didn't realize how emotional it would be. I am not particularly religious although spiritual, and this trip tugged so many heartstrings. This is a destination for everyone, regardless of your religious affiliation or belief system.
- For me, the highlight was feeling the earth on which we stood - and coming closer to understanding its significance. Israel offers luxury that I had not expected. It will blend well with client preferences and desire to come closer to who they are.
- TRAVEX is such a strong and seasoned provider. Their history is impressive and their character is real and sincere. With the history, the religious cultures, the food, the beautiful hotels, in Israel you can't help but be emotionally moved at least once every day. And TRAVEX can put it all together.
- Favorite meals were lunch at the market, a day with a chef and lunch at her private apartment, a casual outdoor luncheon in Old Jerusalem, an impressive meal with a Druze family and the traditional Friday night Shabbat dinner in a family home.
- Old Jerusalem was the most meaningful day for me - everything we saw was so magical, so historical. Our guide added immeasurably to our experience. He was extremely knowledgeable and was able to help us visit all areas introspectively.
- Vad Vashem was incredible, as was participating in the wreath-laying ceremony at the Righteous Among the National. Bethlehem, too, did not disappoint - we felt like the only people around and had a wonderful guide.
- Masada was a special place to see and, of course, swimming (floating!) in the Dead Sea was nothing short of spectacular. Having the hotel day rooms available to us made it an easy and comfortable experience.

- Our boat ride on the Sea of Galilee was so touching (particularly meaningful for Christians) and I would recommend it to all visitors. The jeep ride along the Golan Heights, too, is a must, and if possible, dinner in a private home, as we had.
- Jaffa was a delight, including the tour of the Bauhaus area, the decadent pastries we tried, lunch at The Drisco and our street-art tour.

Wondering which hotels and resorts TRAVEX prefers? We experienced the following during our FAM trip:

- Mamilla, Jerusalem (dinner and stay)
- David Citadel, Jerusalem (site visit)
- King David Hotel, Jerusalem (dinner and site visit)
- Orient Hotel, Jerusalem (site visit)
- Waldorf Astoria, Jerusalem (dinner and stay)
- New Galei Kinneret Hotel, Tiberias (dinner and site visit)
- U Boutique Kinneret, Tiberias (stay)
- Mitzpe Hayamin Hotel, Rosh Pina (lunch and site visit)
- Ritz Carlton Hotel, Herzliya (dinner and site visit)
- The Norman, Tel Aviv (site visit and stay)
- [The Drisco Hotel, Tel Aviv](#) (lunch and site visit)
- New David Kempinski Hotel (cocktails and site visit)
- David Intercontinental Hotel (closing dinner and site visit)
- Vista at Hilton, Tel Aviv (stay and site visit)

Please reach out with any particular questions you may have about these properties.