



JCC Maccabi Israel

Participant Preparation Manual 2022



Welcome to the experience of a lifetime!

There's so much to do and see while you're in Israel – and also a few things you'll need to get ready. The better prepared you are, the more you'll get out of the experience. Read this booklet carefully and keep it as a reference as you get ready for the journey ahead!

About JCC Maccabi Israel

JCC Maccabi Israel (JMI) is a thrilling, educational travel experience where teens have the opportunity to form their own unique connection to Israel and its People. The program is organized by JMI professionals, who provide the same passion for excellence found at all JCCs and JCC Camps. Safety, security, and a quality experience are our guiding priorities.

JCC Association is the continental umbrella organization for the Jewish Community Center Movement, which was started in 1854 and includes 160 JCC, YM-YWHA and camp sites in the U.S. and Canada. Building on over 100 years of experience, we know you will have a deeply meaningful journey under the leadership of the JMI team.

OUR EDUCATIONAL THEMES

JMI's educational themes are woven throughout the workshops, discussions, outdoor activities, hands-on touring, and informal moments of our program:

- ***L'dor v'dor (generation to generation)***: Understanding our past to build our future
- ***Kehillah (community)***: Strengthening our Jewish community and making connections
- ***Mifgashim (connections)***: Fostering dialogue between North American and Israeli teens
- ***Manhigut (leadership)***: Learning values and gaining skills to build future community leaders
- ***Ruach (spirit)***: Embracing a pluralistic and joyous approach toward our Jewish traditions
- ***Gvanim (diversity)***: Exploring the diversity and complexity of Israeli society

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROGRAM BASICS	4	MONEY MATTERS	12
TAKING FLIGHT	5	PACKING	13
STAYING CONNECTED	7	RULES OF THE ROAD	16
INSURANCE	8	TEEN-TO-TEEN ADVICE	17
WELLBEING	9		

Dear JMI Participants,

Shalom! My name is Tal Hadad, the JMI Program Director at the JCC Association who will be welcoming you in Israel this summer!

Soon you will be landing in Israel for an experience like no other! As a former JMI tour educator, I can assure you that the memories that you will make here in Israel will accompany you for the rest of your life. It is going to be exciting, fun, emotional, exhausting, educational, fascinating, surprising, impactful, and sometimes all of these at once.



What makes it so special? Is it spending a significant amount of time surrounded by your best friends from across the world? Is it because you will get to explore a new culture? Is it because you will be visiting the Land you have heard stories about since you were a child? Is it Israel's irrepressible energy? The food? The amazing beaches? The hikes in the desert? It is all of this and so much more. But perhaps most importantly, you will arrive in a country that is also your own – where you will feel part of a giant family that we call the Jewish People. No summer travels anywhere else in the world can give you that!

Although there will be plenty of time for fun and adventure, JMI is also an opportunity to learn about your Jewish heritage, hear stories of heroic Jewish leaders from the past and present, meet Israeli peers who will share their personal stories with you, and visit the most important sites from our shared ancient history.

If I may give you one piece of advice – take advantage of this unique opportunity to the fullest. Enjoy it, allow yourselves to be immersed by it, write about it, take pictures and most importantly, share it. There is nothing more important for the Jewish People than to keep the story going. By soaking up and sharing your experiences, you are keeping this special bond alive – the bond between Israel and the Jewish People.

Wishing you the best summer ever – can't wait to see you here soon!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Tal Hadad', written in a cursive style.

Tal Hadad, JMI Director
JCC Association Center for Israel Engagement

PROGRAM BASICS

STAFF

In addition to your camp staff, our group will be accompanied in Israel by a team of JMI professionals in Israel, including a *moreh derech* (guide), a *madrich* (counselor), and a *ma'ar* (guard/first aid responder). We travel on a private coach bus with our own driver. Staff names are typically announced 3-4 weeks prior to your departure.

We view the staff as the most important asset of the JMI experience, and we place special emphasis on their selection and training. Our staff possesses a deep understanding of their responsibility for the well-being of the teens in our care. In addition, JMI leadership in Israel will periodically visit the group and are on-call to provide additional support as special needs arise.

ROOMING

Standard accommodations are based on 3 or 4 teens per room with a separate bed for each traveler. Rooming plans are determined by camp staff and may change from location to location according to the configuration of the rooms and other considerations.

ITINERARY

The projected itinerary is typically announced 3-4 weeks prior to the start of the program. Please note that even the confirmed itinerary will be subject to change based on local conditions.

MEALS

As a travel-based program, our meals take a variety of forms and may include hotel buffets, restaurants, catered meals, packed meals, and *pizur* (allowance funds) where participants are given funds to purchase a meal on their own. All food provided by JMI in Israel is kosher. In the case of *pizur*, these meals are typically arranged in an area where there are multiple restaurant/food stand options, and teens can choose the food of their liking.

While traveling in Israel, you will find that the food options are numerous, but you can still expect to eat mostly Middle Eastern and Mediterranean foods such as falafel, hummus, schnitzel, shakshouka, bourekas, and much more. Prepare yourself to try new types of foods and flavors. Given the active nature of the program, eating regularly is very important, even if it's not the kind of food you are accustomed to eating.

SHABBAT

Shabbat is a special time and can be an amazing opportunity for rest and reflection. When possible, we include visits to community synagogues or public Shabbat services to give teens a taste of how

Judaism is observed locally. Often, our best or only option is a traditional Orthodox service. Even if this is not part of your tradition, it is an opportunity for a rich cultural experience that can be meaningful too. We also strive to provide alternative options for celebrating Shabbat, and teens are encouraged to take a leadership role in how the experience is shared with the group.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Accommodations, all meals, in-country transportation, basic health insurance (excluding pre-existing conditions), laundry, staff gratuities, and all programming are included. The only spending that will be your responsibility will be snacks, bottled water, souvenirs, gifts, etc.

FRIENDS & FAMILY VISITS

You may have family or friends in Israel that you would like to see during the program. This is your trip, and we want to accommodate these opportunities as much as possible. However, there are also logistical, security, and social considerations. Ultimately, your camp staff will set the policy regarding such visits, but such opportunities will only be considered during non-programmed time, and teens are not allowed to leave the group in any scenario.

TAKING FLIGHT

PASSPORTS

Check to make sure that you know where your passport is and that it is not expired or about to expire. Your passport must be valid for at least six months from the day of your arrival in Israel. If your passport expires within this period, start the renewal process well in advance. Many airlines will deny you boarding if your passport is not valid according to this policy. For more information, call the toll-free federal information number 1-800-688-9889 or visit <http://travel.state.gov/passport>. Here are some more passport-related tips:

- **Plan to carry a photocopy of your passport during the program**

Though our staff will hold on to your passport in Israel for safekeeping, we recommend bringing a digital picture of your passport and a paper copy as a back-up form of identification.

- **Make sure your camp has the passport spelling of your name**

If you are registered with camp using a name other than the spelling in your passport, your ticket will be printed accordingly, and you may be denied boarding for the flight to Israel or subject to significant flight name change fees. Contact your camp to make any corrections ASAP.

VISAS

If you are traveling to Israel on a USA, Canadian, or European Union member country passport, you do not need a visa to enter Israel. If you are traveling on a passport from another country, you may need a visa to enter Israel. We can provide you with an official ticket confirmation letter to assist with issuing any required visas or passport extensions.

Staff Tip: *If you hold an Israeli passport you must enter Israel with your Israeli passport. If either of your parents is Israeli citizens, you may still have obligations to the State of Israel that must be worked out prior to your trip, even if you do not have an Israeli passport. It is critical that you take care of these matters before you arrive in Israel. If you do not, you may be obligated to stay in Israel until matters are resolved, and you will be solely responsible for your own situation and any costs involved. We recommend being cautious about these matters and contacting one of the regional Israel consulate offices if you have questions.*

FLIGHT ESSENTIALS

- Contact your camp for detailed flight information and airport travel arrangements.
- All tickets are issued electronically and staff will have a copy of your e-ticket at the airport.
- Seating is pre-assigned by the airline on our group flights. Special requests can be made at check-in, but not ahead of departure.
- All airline meals are pre-reserved as kosher. If you would like to request a special meal (vegetarian, etc.), please be sure this is noted as part of your camp registration. With the exception of groups flying EL AL Airlines, special meal requests will not be certified kosher.
Staff Tip: *Airlines typically do not accommodate food allergies. Plan accordingly if applicable.*
- If desired, teens are responsible for obtaining reward points via the airline using the ticket information obtained at check-in. Provide the agent at the counter with your appropriate information upon check-in to receive your reward points, or you may call the airline at a later time to obtain reward points.

LUGGAGE RULES

Check with your specific airline for the most updated terms, however, the following are the basic luggage rules for transatlantic group flights:

- Checked Luggage: One bag of no more than 50 pounds and no more than 30 inches long
- Carry-on Luggage: One carry-on backpack

When deciding what kind of luggage to bring, keep in mind you will need to load your luggage on/off the bus and to/from our accommodations. Keep it manageable and bring luggage with



wheels (we suggest a rolling duffel). Before packing, review updated TSA restrictions, and if you bring a suitcase that locks, do not lock it for the flight unless it is a TSA friendly-lock.

Staff Tip: *You will receive two JMI luggage tags before departure. Fill out the luggage tags and affix them to your carry-on and checked luggage for identification purposes throughout our travels.*

ARRIVAL IN ISRAEL

On arrival to Israel, we will meet up after deplaning and proceed to passport control as a group and then onto baggage claim. Within baggage claim we will be met by a greeter wearing a special badge and holding a program sign. In baggage claim, there will be time for restroom breaks and to use an ATM*, but do not wander beyond baggage claim without staff. From there, we will proceed to the bus loading zone which is where pre-ordered rental cell phones/SIM cards will be distributed. Shortly after our arrival in Israel, the JMI staff team will lead an orientation session and security briefing.

***Staff Tip:** *A currency exchange representative will meet the group soon after we arrive. The exchange rate provided is better than what is available inside the airport – and much faster, too!*

LOST LUGGAGE

If your luggage does not arrive with the group flight, a JMI representative will assist you in locating your luggage. Our experience has been that misplaced luggage (meaning that it does not arrive on the same flight as the group) usually arrives on the next flight. If your luggage is indeed lost then group leaders will help you buy whatever you need. The cost of these purchases is the sole responsibility of your family, however, the airlines will most likely reimburse losses up to a certain amount. Additional benefits related to lost or delayed luggage are included with most travel insurance policies (see below for group policy option).

STAYING CONNECTED

USING A CELL PHONE ABROAD

We recommend bringing a cell phone to help staff and teens coordinate and to give families the opportunities to communicate with their campers while traveling abroad. Phone usage is limited to non-programmed time, and we recommend limiting your phone usage in general to get the most out of your experience in Israel. Your camp staff may have additional rules and limitations.

Contact your provider to understand the costs associated with international roaming. If you wish to obtain a local SIM card for your unlocked phone, discounted options are available through 019 Mobile at <https://019mobile.com/groups/jcca1> (including the option for a device rental). The SIM cards available from 019 offer a variety of data packages, and apps like Whatsapp work well for free international texting and calling.



019 orders MUST be arranged in advance of your arrival – there will not be time to make arrangements after we arrive. Campers that pre-order with 019 will receive their SIM card and phone number at the airport in Israel on arrival.

Staff Tip: *Some of the hotels, kibbutzim, and guest houses that we stay at will have wi-fi available, but potentially for an additional fee.*

COMMUNICATING WITH STAFF

Campers will be given 24/7 staff phone numbers as part of their orientation session following arrival in Israel. Parents communication procedures are determined and managed by your camp. While the JMI staff team is in regular connection with camp staff, we are not available for parent communications. If you need to contact JCC Association staff in Israel, email Tal Hadad at t.hadad@jcca.org.

MAILING PACKAGES

Do NOT send packages to teens in Israel. Packages often get delayed by Israeli customs, and even if a package does get through, it may be difficult to get the package to our group. If you forget a necessary item, the staff will do their best to purchase or obtain the item in a timely fashion. For campers, we encourage you to handwrite letters and postcards to your family and friends while in Israel, but keep in mind that the mail system overseas is often slow.

INSURANCE

MEDICAL INSURANCE

Program costs in Israel include basic medical insurance from Harel that covers local treatment and medication (including care related to Covid-19). Be advised that this policy does not cover pre-existing medical conditions, self-induced injuries, or most types of psychological care. The policy does cover treatment for issues such as a stomach bug, an incidental broken limb, dehydration, etc.

without out-of-pocket expenses or paperwork. The policy excludes medical conditions for which a teen is already being treated or treatment that has been received in the past. For this reason, teens are required to travel with their own medical insurance policy, which includes coverage for short-term travel abroad (many travel insurance policies include such coverage). In the event that a teen needs to be treated for a pre-existing conditions during the program, the parents of the teen will be solely responsible for any associated costs.

Learn more about the Harel medical insurance policy we arrange: [Summary Policy](#) | [Detailed Policy](#)

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Families are highly encouraged to sign-up for a travel insurance policy to protect their investment and plan for the unexpected. We have partnered with Travel Insured International to provide a discounted group travel



protection plan for campers that includes benefits such as cancellation, trip interruption, flight delays, lost/delayed luggage, theft, and medical insurance with pre-existing condition coverage. The plans also covers many potential costs related to quarantine scenarios in Israel.

[Learn more and sign-up for a travel protection plan](#)

Staff Tip: The “Student Deluxe Plan” offered by Travel Insured International may be booked any time prior to departure. The Cancel for Any Reason supplement must be booked prior to making your final program payment.

WELLBEING

SUN SAFETY

The sun in Israel is strong and is often stronger than teens are accustomed. Dehydration, heatstroke, and sunburn are serious concerns, especially in the desert. These are some common-sense rules we employ whenever we go on hikes or whenever we will be outdoors for an extended period of time:

- Wear a hat
- No tank tops
- Use sunscreen
- Carry at least two liters of water

Staff Tip: For your wellbeing, tank tops will NOT be allowed during the daytime. You will be asked to purchase more t-shirts if you did not bring enough!

HYDRATION

Given the intensity of the heat in Israel and the active nature of our program, proper hydration is essential to your safety. You should be drinking at least two liters of water per day. You can expect our staff will be constantly reminding you to drink, drink, drink – but ultimately, you must be responsible for keeping your body hydrated. The water in Israel is properly treated and is perfectly safe to drink. Bottled water is widely available and inexpensive, and you will have many opportunities to purchase it. Similarly, you will be able to refill your own water bottles with tap water frequently. Teens will not be allowed off the bus without full water bottles.

SANDFLY SAFETY

A rare condition known as leishmaniasis can develop from a sandfly bite. The condition impacts over 90 countries with tropical and sub-tropical climates, including parts of Israel and the United States. Although no JMI teen has ever contracted the condition, it is a concern. Sandflies are most prevalent in the desert and most active in the evenings. Whenever our groups are out in the desert during dusk-to-dawn hours, we recommend that teens follow these precautions:

- Minimize the amount of exposed (uncovered) skin

Wear lightweight long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and socks - and tuck your shirt into your pants.

- Apply insect repellent to exposed skin

Be sure to cover under the ends of sleeves and pant legs. Follow the instructions on the label of the repellent. The most effective repellents are those that contain the chemical DEET.

If contracted, *leishmaniasis* will typically show symptoms after a few weeks - which in most cases will be after the end of the program. Please be vigilant if you see abnormal-looking bumps or bite marks, as early treatment is important. To learn more, visit [the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) website.

MEDICATION

Rules regarding the handling of prescription and over the counter medication are determined by your camp. JMI staff is not allowed to store, handle or administer prescription medicine. If bringing prescription medication to Israel, be sure to pack the medication in your carry-on baggage and bring a copy of the prescription in case your medication needs to be replaced.

Staff Tip: *Special requests, such as the need to refrigerate medication, may be facilitated by JMI staff in good faith, but we cannot guarantee that all such requests can be accommodated.*

MEDICAL CARE

Our group travels with a security escort who is certified in first aid. Travelers requiring additional care will be treated by a medical professional who visits the group or at a local medical facility. A

member of your camp or JMI staff team will always accompany a camper receiving medical care. In the unlikely event that a camper needs to return home early or a family member needs to travel to Israel due to a medical consideration, such costs are not covered by our local medical insurance policy and will be responsibility of the family. Unforeseen medical transport/escort costs may be covered by a travel insurance policy (see above for group policy option).

DIETARY CONSIDERATIONS

Notify you camp in advance if you have special dietary considerations. JMI staff may follow-up with you directly if more background information is needed. As an organization, JMI will do everything in its power to reasonably accommodate the dietary needs of participants – including pre-arranging solutions with our meal suppliers when a special dietary consideration applies. However, unlike at camp, we do not have control over the kitchen facilities being used, and so we can not give absolute assurances. We will also train our staff to act as partners – helping teens identify appropriate foods and escorting teens to markets to supplement their nutrition when needed, etc.

Staff Tip: *We do recommend that teens with special dietary considerations purchase a pre-made Hebrew diet card describing their needs – e.g. <https://allergytranslation.com/product/hebrew/>*

COVID-19

While traveling in Israel, we are under the supervision and the regulations of Israel’s Ministry of Health, and our return travel to the United States is governed by CDC rules. These regulations are actively evolving, and we expect to share additional details about the procedures approximately three weeks before the start of the program.

SECURITY PRECAUTIONS

Safe travel is our guiding consideration, and we take a number of steps to reduce security risks in Israel – including traveling on a private bus, staying at accommodations with security, planning our itineraries to avoid areas of concern, traveling with an armed guard, and registering for monitoring through Israel's Situation Room. Our rules and approach may adjust during the program based on our best judgement.

We also ask our teens to follow some basic security-related guidelines:

- Be aware of suspicious objects
Be aware not to leave behind personal items that may be confused with a suspicious object.
- Stay together as a group
This is a supervised program, and we depend on teens staying together as a group at all times.

- Follow staff instructions

In addition to traveling with a guard, we travel with licensed guides who are trained in security procedures, and we depend on everyone following their instructions.

MONEY MATTERS

There are multiple ways to access money abroad. Read carefully, and keep in mind that JMI staff are unable to facilitate money transfers to teens during the program. Make a plan in advance!

ATM & CREDIT CARDS

If you choose to use your personal ATM card or credit card, be aware of the following:

- If your ATM card has a Visa, MasterCard, Star, Cirrus, or Maestro logo imprint, you should have no difficulty withdrawing money while abroad. Other ATM network cards may work, but we encourage you to check with your local bank prior to travel.
- Some teens have experienced difficulty withdrawing money from savings accounts. We strongly recommend that ATM cards be linked to checking accounts only to prevent any potential complications in Israel.
- Major credit cards like Visa and MasterCard are also accepted throughout Israel. Contact your bank ahead of travel to inform them that you are traveling abroad, and will be using your cards to make purchases.
- Do not send your child with prepaid gift/credit cards as they will likely not be accepted abroad.

Staff Tip: *Check with your bank before travel to find out service fee charges when using ATMs and credit cards internationally.*

CASH MONEY

Dollars are not accepted abroad. If you plan to bring cash with you, either plan to exchange it to local currency before you depart for the program or at the airport in Israel. There will be very few opportunities to exchange funds during the program itself. Most stores accept credit cards. You will only need cash to use at smaller stores and food stands.

Staff Tip: *A currency exchange representative will meet the group in the bus loading zone. The exchange rate provided is better than what is available inside the airport baggage claim area – and much faster, too!*

THE LOCAL CURRENCY

In Israel, the local currency is the New Israeli Shekel (NIS). Each shekel is worth about \$0.30 USD

and each USD is worth about 3.30 NIS. Keep in mind, coins in Israel come in higher values than what we are used to in North America. This means you need to watch your coins carefully. Additionally, keep in mind that there are 5 Shekel coins (~\$1.5 USD) and 5 Agorot coins (~\$0.01 USD). It is important to know the difference between the 10, 5, and 1 shekel and agorot coins, as they have drastically different values.

Staff Tip: The exchange rates are constantly fluctuating, check the online rates prior to the trip.

SPENDING MONEY IN ISRAEL

You will want to have money for gifts, extra snacks, and miscellaneous items. There are no restrictions on the amount of foreign currency visitors may bring into Israel. From our experience, participants spend an average of \$100/week for snacks and drinks etc.

PACKING

SUMMER WEATHER

In Israel, temperatures range from hot to hotter in the summer. Clothing should be lightweight and comfortable in the heat. Whenever outside for an extended period, teens will be required to have a hat, a shirt with sleeves, sunscreen, and water. Overexposure to the hot Middle Eastern sun can cause heatstroke, dehydration, and sunburns. The good news is the heat is mostly dry – there is very little humidity, and the chance of rain in Israel during the summer is practically zero – no umbrellas needed!

Staff Tip: *Evenings in Israel tend to get chilly quickly – frequently into the 50’s or 60’s. Because we will not always return to our accommodations to change before an evening activity, always bring a daypack with a windbreaker, long-sleeved shirt, or light sweater. Layering is key!*

RELIGIOUS SITES

We will be visiting sacred and religious sites during the program, and it is often customary to keep knees and shoulders covered. Specifically, when visiting the Kotel, girls should wear long flowy skirts or other temporary coverings. Tight pants are not appropriate. On Shabbat, we ask that teens wear nicer clothing than what would be worn during the normal touring week; this helps to create a unique Shabbat atmosphere. For reference, you may wear similar clothing that you would wear for Shabbat at camp!

FOOTWEAR

We will be doing a lot of walking and having comfortable shoes is important! Flip flops will not be

allowed when we are on the move, and while athletic sandals like Tevas or Chacos are fine most days in Israel, they are not appropriate for days when we have hikes/nature walks. While it is not necessary to bring hiking boots, comfortable and sturdy walking shoes are a must for all programming.

VALUABLES

Theft is not uncommon in any place where many tourists congregate, and there have been instances in Israel in the past. Accordingly, we encourage you to leave valuable items at home and to carefully keep track of anything valuable that you do bring on the program. As a rule, hotel rooms should always remain locked. However, even a locked hotel room should not be considered a secure area unless a safe with a lock is available. If you bring a lock for your suitcase, locking it in the room is an option. If it is possible to bring a locking suitcase, we recommend it, although it is not a solution by itself. Teen property is the sole responsibility of the teen, and if a theft occurs, please notify staff immediately so that we can file a police report.

LAUNDRY

Laundry service will be scheduled approximately every 8-10 days. Teens will typically be given a laundry bag to use, and we encourage teens to pair up so that whites and colors are combined in shared bags. We recommend labeling all clothing to be laundered. JMI and its partners are not responsible for clothing lost or damaged during the laundry process.

Staff Tip: *Bringing a large size Ziploc bag is a good solution for storing dirty clothes in between laundry.*

ELECTRIC ITEMS

The electrical plugs in Israel are different than in North America – with two rounded prongs that are separated slightly further apart than the ones at home. Inexpensive adapters are available to convert the shape of the plug to the Israeli standard. The electrical current is also different in Israel (220 voltage in Israel vs. 110 in North America), and it will require a voltage converter to avoid frying your devices.



Staff Tip: *Note that most phones already come with built-in voltage converters.*

TOILETRIES

Most accommodations where we stay will supply basic toiletries such as shampoo, body wash, and soap. However, we recommend packing a travel size quantity of these items as a back-up.

GROUP T-SHIRTS

It is customary on JMI teen trips that your group design and print their own t-shirts (usually towards the end of the program). Teens often put together a committee that chooses the color of the shirt, text, and other trip-related content.

SAMPLE PACKING LIST

Use this packing list as a guideline and keep in mind that laundry will be done every 8-10 days.

What we recommend

- 10 t-shirts (no tank tops)
- 5 pairs of shorts
- 2 pairs of jeans or khakis
- 12 pairs of underwear & socks
- 2 long sleeve shirts
- 1 windbreaker or lightweight sweater
- 2-3 bathing suits
- 2-3 pajamas
- 1 beach towel
- 2 Shabbat/nicer outfits (modest) plus longer skirts/shirts for Kotel, etc.
- Sturdy walking shoes (closed-toed)
- 1 pair of water shoes with backs (e.g. Aqua Socks, Tevas, Chacos, Keens, etc.)
- 1-2 hats for protection from the sun
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Soap, razor, deodorant, etc.
- Glasses
- Contact lens case, solution, and spare contact lenses
- Sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher)
- Bug spray
- Passport and photocopy of passport (must be valid for at least six months from departure)
- Sunglasses
- Light backpack
- Portable charger
- Enough prescription medication for the duration of the program
- Copy of prescriptions in case medicine is lost
- Flashlight
- Water bottle
- Kippah for Shabbat if it is your custom
- Various sized Ziploc bags for holding valuables on water hikes & wet clothing

What we don't recommend

- Linens, pillows or sleeping bag
- Luggage that is not easily carried
- Expensive jewelry or other valuables
- Heavy backpack or hiking boots

RULES OF THE ROAD

While your camp is primarily responsible for setting conduct and disciplinary standards, we recognize the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity of a summer in Israel and that the success of that experience is dependent on following some basic Rules of the Road:

LEAVING THE PROGRAM WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION

JMI participants are not allowed to leave the supervision of the program at any time – day or night. There will be occasions for limited personal exploration time in pre-specified areas that are deemed secure by program staff. Leaving the program without specific staff authorization can be dangerous and is grounds for removal.

TIMELINESS & COOPERATION WITH STAFF

Behind the scenes of the JMI experience is a complicated logistical plan which requires us to keep to an exact schedule. Staying on schedule requires the cooperation of every teen. It means waking up in the morning on time, not wandering when we are on the move, and respecting the overall schedule. Being late may translate into elements of the program being canceled – which would be highly disrespectful to your fellow campers. We need every teen’s cooperation to ensure that the program can be experienced to the fullest.

RESPECT FOR PROPERTY

It is expected that teens will behave responsibly and with respect regarding other people’s belongings and property throughout the program. Should property be damaged, defaced or lost – including property belonging to our accommodations and transportation partners – those responsible will be held accountable for payment of damages.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

The purchase, use, possession, or sale of controlled substances may carry personal and legal consequences far more stringent than the laws of your home community and is grounds for removal from the JMI program. Please note that program staff reserves the right to search a Participant’s person and/or belongings and are further authorized to administer mandatory drug and alcohol testing in its sole discretion.

SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

We believe in the unique power of a group experience as opposed to a collection of individual experiences. As part of a traveling community, each teen has a responsibility to treat their fellow teens with respect and decency. We aim to create an inclusive atmosphere where everyone on the program is made to feel welcomed and comfortable; each teen plays a role in making this possible.

TEEN-TO-TEEN ADVICE

Here are some final words of wisdom from teens on past JMI summer programs. Take their advice!

- Israel is hot – drink extra water every day.
- Go with the flow – things in Israel are a lot less structured than in America...learn to love it!
- Plan to wear sunscreen and bring a comfortable hat – you won't be given a choice.
- Step outside of your comfort zone – e.g., “get ready for salad for breakfast.”
- Take a lot of pictures (of people and places).
- Prepare to be dirty and sweaty a lot, so avoid clothing you do not want to risk ruining.
- Don't overpack – you've got to schlep your own bags.
- Keep a journal or document your experience online.
- Prepare yourself and your parents for minimal communication over the course of the trip (that's part of the fun!)
- Again, drink a TON of water!!



JCC Association is proud to present the JCC Maccabi Games™, JCC Maccabi ArtsFest™, and JCC Maccabi Israel™ Connecting Jewish teens through sports, the arts, and travel.

JCC Israel Center
The Solomon & Mary Litt Building
12 Moshe Hess Street
Jerusalem, 94185, Israel
tel: 011-972-2-625-1265
fax: 011-972-2-624-7767

JCC Association
520 Eighth Avenue
New York, NY 10018
tel: (212) 532-4949
fax: (212) 481-4174



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