



*is pleased to announce a new tour*

# *In Search of the Esoteric to the Exotic Israel, Jordan and Turkey*

*from the Holy sites of Israel to sites of antiquity at Petra  
and Jerash, Troy and Ephesus, to the exotic treasures of Istanbul*

*with Brian Gray and Ted Mahle*

*faculty at Rudolf Steiner College*

*April 10 to 28, 2011*

*We have arranged our own tour in Israel and will be traveling  
with Explore Worldwide in Jordan and Turkey.*

*Land only US\$2500 - \$2625 depending on number of  
participants.*

*For full itinerary and further information please contact  
Sarnia Guiton 604-740-0676 [sarnia@dccnet.com](mailto:sarnia@dccnet.com)*

# Sophia Tours offers: IN SEARCH OF THE ESOTERIC TO THE EXOTIC Israel, Jordan and Turkey

Day 1 – Sunday April 10

Arrive Tel Aviv – individual transfers to Jerusalem – evening Orientation

Overnight: Alcazar Hotel (Jerusalem) [www.jrscazar.com](http://www.jrscazar.com) 011-972-2-628-0693

Day 2 – Monday April 11 (walking) Jerusalem

Taking a packed lunch, we walk to the David Museum and Davidson Centre, the Rabbinical Tunnels, Wilson Arch and Western Wall. After stopping for lunch, we visit the City of David, Pool of Siloam and Hezekiah's Tunnel.

Overnight: Alcazar Hotel (Jerusalem)

Day 3 – Tuesday April 12 (bus) Jerusalem, Bethpage & Bethany

Taking a packed lunch, we drive up the Mount of Olives & visit the Ascension Church/Mosque. Crossing the checkpoint, we transfer to a Palestinian bus & guide to visit Bethpage, Bethany and Tomb of Lazarus. Returning through the checkpoint, we visit the Garden of Gethsemane and Church of All Nations, Tomb of the Virgin, and the Church of Peter in Callicantu.

Overnight: Alcazar Hotel (Jerusalem)

Day 4 – Wednesday April 13 (walking) Jerusalem

We first walk from our hotel to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher to see all three levels, then continue to Mt Zion to see David's Tomb, Hall of the Last Supper and the Church of the Dormition. After lunch, walking back to Stephen's Gate & the Church of St Anne at Pool of Bethesda, we can then walk the Via Dolorosa and Stations of the Cross (which includes the Ecce Homo arch, Lithostratus & Church of the Flagellation). On arrival at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher you can revisit if you wish or take free time to explore the Jaffa Gate market. 4:00pm Communion service at the Garden Tomb for those who wish to attend.

Overnight: Alcazar Hotel (Jerusalem)

Day 5 – Thursday April 14 (bus) **7:30am start** Bethlehem & Jerusalem

We drive to the checkpoint & transfer to a Palestinian bus & guide. In Bethlehem we visit the Church of the Nativity and Shepherds Field. Returning through the checkpoint we visit Herod's castle at Herodium, the Israel Museum with the model of Jerusalem and the Shrine of the Book, and continue on to the Knesset and the Garden Tomb and Solomon's Quarries.

Overnight: Alcazar Hotel (Jerusalem)

Day 6 – Friday April 15 (bus) Haifa, Acre & Nazareth

We drive to Caesarea, passing the Roman ruins of the Aqueduct and Theater then continue north to Haifa with a brief stop at the Bahai Temple with a beautiful view of the city. We drive on to Acre and explore the underground city with the Hall of Knights of St John, small museum, harbor and old walls. (We may stop for a brief visit to the Arab/Jewish Waldorf School at Shefar'am or make a separate visit on Sunday afternoon for those who wish.)

Overnight: Fauzi Azar Inn (Nazareth) [www.fauziazarinn.com](http://www.fauziazarinn.com) 011-972-54-432-2328

Day 7 – Saturday April 16 (bus) Galilee

We pass by Tiberius to see the old walls, then to the Church of the Beatitudes on the Hill with the beautiful views of the Sea of Galilee, Tabkha, the Church of the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes, Capernaum and the old Synagogue and House of Peter. We then drive around the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee to walk in Mgrasa Nature Area, near Gamla, before continuing to the southern outflow of the Jordan River and the Yardenet Baptism site. On the way back to Nazareth we can view the Horns of Hittin.

Overnight: Fauzi Azar Inn

Day 8 – Sunday April 17 (bus) Galilee

We see Mt Tabor and visit the Church of the Transfiguration, the Church of Cana, and Nain. On returning to Nazareth we visit the Church of the Annunciation, Mary's Well and the Old Synagogue with free time to further explore Nazareth.

Overnight: Fauzi Azar Inn

Day 9 – Monday April 18 (bus) Dead Sea

We leave Galilee & drive south to Old Jericho, then continue to Qumran, by the Dead Sea, where the Dead Sea scrolls were found in adjoining cliffs. After lunch we continue to Masada followed by a bathe in the Dead Sea (time permitting). This is the evening of the Seder, the eve of Passover when everything closes early. Seder dinner.

Overnight: Metzoke Dragot 'Resort' [www.Metzoke.co.il/English](http://www.Metzoke.co.il/English) 011-972-8-622-3012

Day 10 – Tuesday April 19 [Passover] (bus) to Jordan

We drive south to Eilat to cross the border and have lunch at Aqaba in Jordan. Once across the border we drive north from Aqaba to Wadi Mousa (Petra). The town of Wadi Mousa is situated just outside the abandoned Nabatean city of Petra. A large town with good facilities, it provides a convenient base for exploring this World Heritage Site.

Overnight: Taybet Zaman Hotel & Resort (Wadi Mousa) 011-962-215-0111? no website

Nestled against the mountains, its quiet location offers tranquility in a busy town. The hotel is a restored village with rooms built in one-storey blocks on narrow streets, these are decorated in traditional Jordanian style. It has a small souk as well as an indoor pool and views from the restaurant of the mountains which surround Petra.

Day 11 – Wednesday April 20 (bus & walking) Petra

We have a full day in Petra with morning guided tour then free afternoon. Walking through the narrow gorge of the siq brings you to the Treasury, the first of the hundreds

of facades carved into the desert cliffs by the Nabateans. We continue through

the city, exploring tombs, Roman ruins and temples before heading up to the Monastery, an amazing site with its facade towering above you. Our local guide will provide us with information on this ancient city before leaving us to explore independently this afternoon.

Overnight: Taybet Zaman

Day 12 – Thursday April 21 (bus) Kerak, Madaba, Amman

We drive from Wadi Mousa (Petra) to Kerak, a small, bustling market town encircled by large stone walls. The Crusader castle of Kerak is one of the finest in the Middle East. It took 20 years for the Crusaders to build and soon became one of Saladin's favourite artillery points. After visiting the castle, we continue on to Madaba, a Christian town famous for its mosaics and affectionately known as the 'City of Mosaics'. The 6th Century mosaic map of the Holy Land is the most impressive and we will see it in St. Georges Church. We continue to Mount Nebo which is believed to be the burial site of Moses. The small Byzantine church was built by early Christians and is now one of the most popular holy sites in Jordan. We may also visit the most accepted site of the Baptism at Bethany-Beyond-the-Jordan We end the day in Amman, the capital of Jordan, built across several hills. Evidence of its ancient beginnings can be found in the citadel, whilst the downtown still houses a Roman Theatre which is built into the hillside.

Overnight: Al Qasr Metropole (Amman) [www.alqasrmetropole.com](http://www.alqasrmetropole.com) 011-962-6-568-9671

Day 13 – Friday April 22 (Good Friday) (bus) Jerash & Ajloun

Today we visit Jerash and Ajloun Castle. Built by the legions of Alexander the Great in the 2nd century, Jerash flourished under the Roman General Pompey. With colonnaded streets, temples and theatres, you can discover the monuments of one of the best preserved Roman cities in the world. We then travel on to the medieval Castle of Ajloun. Formerly this was used as a base to defend the land from the Crusaders.

Overnight: Al Qasr Metropole Hotel

Day 14 – Saturday April 23 Istanbul

We will be met at the hotel and transferred to the airport for Royal Jordanian flight 165 dep. Amman 11:20am arr. Istanbul 1:40pm. Istanbul – transfer from airport to hotel. Free time.

Overnight: Hotel Gozde (Istanbul) [www.hotelgozde.com](http://www.hotelgozde.com) 011-90-212-511-9796

Day 15 – Sunday April 24 (Easter Sunday) (walking) Istanbul

We have a full day to explore this fascinating city. Formerly Constantinople, Istanbul was the old capital of the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires. Nearly all the main sites of historic interest are in Old Stamboul. Our tour will include taking in Hagia Sophia, the Blue Mosque, Topkapi Palace and Sultanahmet Square within the two days. This afternoon we will also take a boat trip on the Bosphorous.

Overnight: Hotel Gozde

Day 16 – Monday April 25 (walking) Istanbul

Today we will explore Istanbul further with a tour that includes the Bazaar and the Old Walls.

Overnight: Hotel Gozde

Day 17 – Tuesday April 26 (bus) Pergamum

We cross the Dardanelles Straits to the Gallipoli (Gelibolu) Peninsula and Canakkale. We visit the ancient site of Troy where, according to legend, Ulysses devised the Wooden Horse strategy and thereby ended the 10 year Trojan War. Nine ruined cities, one on top of the other, have been uncovered, going back some 5000 years. From here we will continue to the Greco-Roman remains of Pergamum (now the typical Turkish town of Bergama).

Overnight: Hotel (Pergamum) details not known

Day 18 – Wednesday April 27 (bus) Ephesus

We drive to Ephesus – once visited by Mark Anthony and Cleopatra, and also by the evangelist St. Paul (which inspired the Epistle to the Ephesians), this famous old Asia Minor seaport reached its zenith in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD. Efes became one of the main cultural and economic centres of the ancient world until it went into decline after the 7th century. We will also visit Mary's House, situated between Ephesus and Seljuk which is where the Virgin Mary is believed to have lived out her days.

Overnight: Hitit Hotel (Selcuk) [www.hitithotel.com](http://www.hitithotel.com) 011-90-232-892-6920

Day 19 – Thursday April 28 – tour officially ends – optional day trip to Patmos.