

Nature Israel Discovery Mission
November 7th – 11th 2021



“Israel is literally dotted with lovely corners and even a few species that would have long ago disappeared without SPNI's uncompromising voice.”

Pollution in a Promised Land, an environmental history of Israel –
Professor Alon Tal

You are invited to spend a week with us this November to see some of these corners and species that through your support of SPNI you've helped save.

For veteran SPNI supporters this week is a chance for us to show you how thankful we are for your generosity. We will take you to enjoy Israel's finest nature and share with you the inside story of how you've made a difference to our country.

For first timers to Israel and to SPNI, you'll see a different, beautiful side to Israel that you never realized existed while learning about the history of one of the world's oldest environmental organizations.

Enjoy a week of unique insights, beautiful nature, 5-star accommodation, great company and amazing food.

Itinerary

Sunday November 7th

Gazelle Valley

Located in the shadow of the infamous Holyland apartment block, the Gazelle Valley was saved by SPNI and turned into an urban wildlife park. A haven for the endangered Israeli mountain gazelle. Amir Balaban, our Director of Urban Nature, will tell you the story of how the park came to be and how it's being used as a model for urban sustainability in Israel and around the world.

Levi Eshkol House

Levi Eshkol is arguably Israel's most underappreciated Prime Minister. We will give you a guided tour of Israel's Historic Prime Ministers' Residence where you will learn about Levi Eshkol's impact on Israeli-American relations, developing Israel's economy and building the National Water Carrier.

Tour of Jerusalem's Old City

No visit to Israel is complete without a visit to Jerusalem's Old City. You'll have a guided tour to the Western Wall, Cardo and other areas of interest in this important place to all three of the world's major religions.

Return to hotel to freshen up before dinner as a group

Overnight: David Citadel, Jerusalem

Monday November 8th

Nili and David Jerusalem Bird Observatory

In 1993 two young birdwatchers discovered a banded migrant bird from Sweden and so started the Nili and David Jerusalem Bird Observatory. Now over 50,000 children from Jerusalem and the surrounding area visit the JBO. You'll be joining them to experience an unforgettable up close bird banding activity and learn about the importance of Israel on bird migration routes.

Kasser El Yahud Baptismal Site

Kasser El Yahud is visited by thousands of Christian pilgrims each year who visit this place where Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist. It's here that SPNI is working to fulfill one of Isaiah's prophecies by turning abandoned army bunkers into roosts for endangered bats.

Reimagining the Ein Gedi Field School

SPNI is the biggest provider of environmental education in Israel, including hundreds of classes each year at our network of Field Schools. Iris Hann, our CEO will join you to tell you about our ambitious plans to revolutionize sustainable building in Israel together with experiential environmental educational.

Wadi David Hike

Enjoy an easy/medium hike to David's waterfall, one of the many trails in the area. Learn about the natural and biblical history of Ein Gedi during a 60-90 minute walk up this ancient desert spring.

Return to Jerusalem for an evening at leisure and dinner on your own

Overnight: David Citadel, Jerusalem

Tuesday November 9th

Kfar Ruppin

Kibbutz Kfar Ruppin on the banks of the Jordan River is home to one of SPNI's most ambitious initiatives – to create an artificial wetland, to support mass bird migration and global biodiversity. You'll hear about the complexities of managing an artificial wetland and SPNI's bold goals for replicating this model nationwide.

Wine Tasting at Tabor Winery

Israel is home to a dynamic wine industry. On our way north you'll stop at the Tabor Winery for light lunch and wine tasting. Relax while tasting some of the amazing vintages that are grown and bottled here.

National Water Carrier

Completed in 1956 Israel's National Water Carrier is still Israel's largest

infrastructure project. Moving water from the Sea of Galilee/Kinneret across the country the National Water Carrier is really the foundation for Israel's modern economy. At your visit to the Mekorot pumping site, you'll learn all about the amazing work that went into this incredible feat and also about the current status of Israel's water economy.

Freshen up at the hotel for dinner as a group

Overnight: Pastoral Hotel, Hula Valley

Wednesday November 10th

Sunrise tour of Hula Valley

Undoubtedly one of the annual highlights of Israeli nature is the phenomenal experience of watching 40,000 cranes take off from the Hula Valley while the sky rises over the Golan Heights. Bring your binoculars and cameras for one of the best nature experiences available anywhere in the world.

Tel Dan and Beit Ussishkin

Before we leave the north you will enjoy Tel Dan, an hour-long hike mixing together nature and biblical archeology. Tel Dan is home to the Abrahamic Gate which dates back to Canaanite times, the ancient city of Dan and is also one of the main sources of the Dan spring.

Before we leave we'll also visit Beit Ussishkin is SPNI's unique museum detailing the geological and natural history of the Galilee and Golan. It's also home to the Northern Trailhead of the world-famous Israel National Trail.

Although you won't have time to hike the entire Israel National Trail on this trip you can take a photo commemorating your first few steps along the path.

Vulture Breeding Program at Hai Bar Carmel

Israel's Griffon Vultures nearly became extinct decades ago, now thanks to your support and partnerships with Israel's Nature and Parks Authority, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Israel Electrical Company these magnificent birds are having a comeback. You will get a behind the scenes tour of the vulture

breeding center at Hai Bar Carmel and learn how your support helps bring populations back from the brink of extinction.

Check into the hotel and freshen up for a free evening at leisure and dinner on own

Overnight: David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

Thursday November 12th

IDF's Officer Training School

SPNI Chairman Yossi ben Artzi is honored to be able to show you around the IDF's Officer Training School. You will gain a deeper understanding of how leadership in the IDF is cultivated and the proud history behind one of the world's strongest military forces

Visit to an Educational Program in a School

SPNI is the Ministry of Education's partner in developing engaging and informative nature programs for young Israelis. You'll come away inspired after working with some of the students in an interactive activity.

After lunch, drop off at hotel and a free afternoon in Tel Aviv

Return to the hotel to freshen up and join the group for a closing dinner to reflect on an unforgettable week

Overnight: David Intercontinental Hotel, Tel Aviv

Optional Mission Add On: Friday November 13th

TLV Balloon

Get a bird's eye view of Tel Aviv and Israel's entire central region. From 300 feet up you'll gain an appreciation of the difficulties of planning in this complex environment.

Rosh Tzippur Artificial Wetlands

A last chance to enjoy some quiet in nature before heading home in one of the

hides in Rosh Tzippur, an artificial wetland created in the middle of Tel Aviv's Yarkon River. With the help of one of SPNI's bird guides, you'll be spotting many different species from the water level

Carmel Shuk Tour

We will take you straight from the quiet of nature to the bustle of the Carmel Market on Friday. Our guide will lead you on an unforgettable walking, tasting and cultural tour of Tel Aviv's oldest market and treat you to some of the finest culinary delights in the city.

*Itinerary subject to change

Prices and Important Information:

Shared Occupancy: \$2,599 p/p

Single Occupancy: \$3,299 p/p

Price includes 5* accommodation 8-12th November inclusive, private transport, guide, all activities, breakfasts and lunch and three dinners

Optional Extras:

Friday Mission add-on: \$330

David Citadel Upgrade to Old City View Room: \$180 per room upgraded

Not included:

- Tips (\$20 per person per day, collected on the first day)
- Airfare and airport transfer not included
- Participants should be able to handle light to moderate intensity activities
- Participants must have own travel insurance