



DALLAS ISRAEL TEEN TOUR

SUMMER 2022
GETTING READY GUIDE



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank You to Our Dallas Israel Teen Tour (DITT) Committee and Underwriters!

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Jewish Federation of Greater Dallas is a proud partner and grantee of RootOne, a new initiative that helps connect thousands of Jewish teens to Israel by lowering the financial barrier to participation in immersive summer trips to Israel and by investing in the educational quality of those experiences. RootOne is seeded through a generous grant by The Marcus Foundation and powered by The Jewish Education Project. Visit www.RootOne.org for more information.



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DALLAS ISRAEL TEEN TOUR

JUNE 27 - JULY 18, 2022

PROGRAM BASICS

Meet Team DITT



Melissa Bernstein
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Leah Dubrawsky
Director/Program Coordinator
Friendship Circle of Dallas



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Director
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Rooming

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

ITINERARY

A projected itinerary is available on our website <https://jewishdallas.org/news-events/teentour>. 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, specially catered meals, and allowance funds for participants to purchase a meal on their own. All food provided in Israel is kosher. Some meals may be provided via *pizur*, an allowance system whereby teens will be given cash to purchase the food of their choice. Such meals are typically arranged in an area where there are multiple restaurant 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.

SHABBAT

Shabbat is a special time and can be an amazing opportunity for rest and reflection. When possible, we try to include visits to local synagogues to give teens a taste of how Judaism is observed locally. These opportunities provide for a rich cultural and meaningful experience. 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. As a program, we do not drive on Shabbat, and we do not oblige or encourage teens to break the rules of Shabbat. At the same time, what teens do during non-programmed time on Shabbat is their own decision. We only ask that everyone be mindful and considerate of each other's practices, including other guests at the places where we stay for Shabbat.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Our accommodations, all meals, in-country transportation, basic health insurance (excluding pre-existing conditions), laundry, gratuities, and all programming are included. The only spending that will be your responsibility will be snacks, bottled water, souvenirs, gifts, etc. We estimate that \$100-\$150/week in personal spending money is sufficient.

FRIENDS & FAMILY VISITS

You may have family or friends in Israel that you would like to see during the program, and we would want to accommodate these opportunities. However, there are logistical, security, and social considerations. Any visiting opportunities will be considered during non-programming time ONLY and must be pre-arranged and pre-approved prior to leaving Dallas. Teens will not be allowed to leave the group in any scenario. All visitors will need to come to the group.



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TAKING FLIGHT

Flight Information

FLIGHT NUMBER	DEPARTURE DATE	DEPARTURE TIME	DEPARTURE AIRPORT	ARRIVAL AIRPORT	ARRIVAL DATE	ARRIVAL TIME
AA2292	6/27/2022	0444P	DFW	JFK	6/27/2022	0929P
AA 146	6/27/2022	1100P	JFK	TLV	6/28/2022	0500P
AA 145	7/18/2022	1250A	TLV	JFK	7/18/2022	0600A
AA2246	7/18/2022	0820A	JFK	DFW	7/18/2022	1116A

PASSPORTS

Do not pack your passport in your luggage. When traveling, all teens will be responsible for their passports. Please carry your passport with you. You will use your passport to check in at the airport and receive your ticket. In Israel, our team will hold on to your passport for safekeeping.



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 regional Israel consulate office if you have questions.



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FLIGHT ESSENTIALS

- All tickets are issued electronically. The DITT team 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 to let the DITT team know as soon as possible if it was not included on your medical form.
- 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.



staff Tip: Airlines typically do not accommodate food allergies. Please plan accordingly.

LUGGAGE RULES

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 suitcase or 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 DITT 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.



Additional staff Tip: In your carry-on, pack an extra set of clothes, your glasses/contacts, medicines, extra prescriptions, and a toothbrush and toothpaste for at least one day, in case your luggage is lost.



ARRIVAL IN ISRAEL

On arrival in 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 DITT 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! In advance of our departure a form will be sent to you to indicate the dollars your teen plans to exchange with the currency representative at the airport.

LOST LUGGAGE

If your luggage does not arrive with the group flight, a DITT team member 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.



staff Tip: Pack extra clothes for at least one day in your carry-on, along with your medicines, glasses/contacts, and a toothbrush.





STAYING CONNECTED

— USING A CELL PHONE ABROAD —

Each DITT teen is required to have a cell phone while in Israel. This will allow the teens to be in communications with the DITT team as well as with parents. 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. The DITT team may have additional rules and limitations.

If you plan to bring your own cell phone abroad, 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://www.charges.co.il/groups/authenticisrael-programs>. The SIM cards available from 019 offer a variety of data packages, and apps like Whatsapp work well for free international texting and calling.

All SIM card/device orders **MUST** be arranged in advance of your arrival. There will not be time to make arrangements after we arrive. Teens that pre-order with 019 will receive their SIM card and phone number at the airport in Israel.



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.

— HOW AND WHEN TO CALL —

For parents and friends who wish to contact a teen during the program, keep in mind that Israel is eight hours ahead of Central Time. Please also remember that the use of communication devices during scheduled program time will not be permitted.



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— EMAIL & INTERNET ACCESS —

Some of the hotels, kibbutzim, and guest houses that we stay at will have wi-fi available, which teens are welcome to use during free time, often for an additional fee. The SIM cards available from 019 offer a variety of data packages, and apps like Whatsapp work well for free international texting and calling. DITT will use Whatsapp as its means of communicating with the teens while in Israel.

— COMMUNICATION —

Teens will be given 24/7 staff phone numbers as part of their orientation session following arrival in Israel. Because we believe staying in touch is critical, the staff at the Federation in Dallas, will maintain constant communication with the group and their families. The DITT team will be focused on the teens and not available for direct parent communication. Parents, if you need to contact the group, please email Karen Schlosberg at kschlosberg@jewishdallas.org.

INSURANCE

— MEDICAL INSURANCE —

Program costs in Israel include basic medical insurance from **Harel** (including Covid related care) that covers local treatment and medication. Be advised that this policy does not cover pre-existing medical conditions, self-induced injuries, or psychological care. This means that the policy covers treatment for issues such as a stomach bug, an incidental broken limb, dehydration, etc. without out-of-pocket expenses or paperwork. The policy does not cover any 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 condition during the program, the parents of the teen will be solely responsible for any associated costs.





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

Israel is HOT!! Even hotter than Dallas!! 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 to 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. 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

DITT 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 DITT 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 our DITT team will always accompany a teen receiving medical care. In the unlikely event that a teen 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.

DIETARY CONSIDERATIONS

Please notify the DITT team in advance if you have special dietary considerations. We will do everything in our power to reasonably accommodate the dietary needs of participants—including pre-arranging solutions with our meal suppliers when a special dietary consideration applies. However, we do not have control over the kitchen facilities being used, and so we cannot give absolute assurances. The DITT team will 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. Guidance from the Ministry is actively evolving, and we expect to share additional details about the procedures and our approach for this summer prior to departure.

SECURITY PRECAUTIONS

As a program, we take precautions to reduce security risks, which include 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 judgment.

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 a licensed guide who is 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 the DITT team are unable to facilitate money transfers to teens during the program. Plan accordingly.

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 (we will have someone meeting us at the airport to exchange money). There will be very few opportunities to exchange funds during the program itself. If you are looking to purchase souvenirs on the program, most stores will accept credit cards. You will only need cash to use at smaller stores and stalls. We recommend mainly using credit cards during the program and using cash for times when credit is not accepted.



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! In advance of our departure a form will be sent to you to indicate the dollars your teen plans to exchange with the currency representative at the airport.



—THE LOCAL CURRENCY—

In Israel, the local currency is the New Israeli Shekel (NIS). Each shekel is worth about \$0.30 USD. 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: Note that exchange rates are constantly fluctuating, check the rates prior to your program.

—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 gifts, ice cream and drinks etc.



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PACKING

We will be experiencing a great deal of Israel and Israelis in just 3 weeks, and will be moving hotels several times. Assume that laundry will be done once during the trip. Still, you should pack as lightly as possible (we won't tell if we see you wearing something more than once!).

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!

Knesset Dress Code: Visitors should note that in accordance with the Knesset dress code, entrance to the Knesset is permitted only in dignified and appropriate attire (no tank/spaghetti tops, crop tops, clothing with political slogans, shorts or knee-length trousers, ripped trousers, short skirts and dresses, tracksuits or sweatpants, flip-flops, or clogs). These rules apply to all visitors ages 14 and up. Guests under age 18 on official Visitor Center tours may wear tracksuits or sweatpants.



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 a large number of 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 general 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 one time during the trip. 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. DITT 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. The electrical current in Israel is 220 volts AC vs. 110 in North America and it will require a voltage converter to avoid frying your devices. DITT provides each participant with one adapter to convert the shape of the plug to the Israeli standard. Note that most phones already come with built-in voltage converters. If you're just charging your phone, you may consider a USB adapter. In some instances, the hotels have hair dryers and special "shavers only" outlets for U.S. 110 volts AC. Additional adapters may be purchased online.

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.

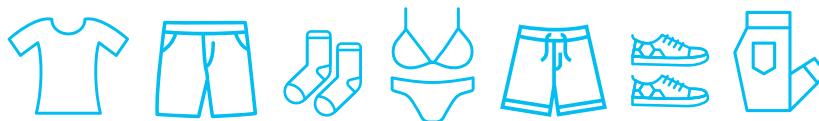


GROUP T-SHIRTS

Each teen will be provided with two Dallas Israel Teen Tour t-shirts. The group is required to wear one of these on departure and at other times as advised by the staff.

SAMPLE PACKING LIST

Use this packing list as a guideline and keep in mind that laundry will be done once while we are gone.



WHAT WE RECOMMEND

- 10 t-shirts (no tank tops)
- 2 DITT t-shirts
- 5 pairs of shorts
- 2 pairs of jeans or khakis
- 12 pairs of underwear and 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, Knesset, 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
- Face covering/masks (for Covid)
- Water bottle
- Kippah
- Various sized Ziploc bags for holding valuables on water hikes and wet clothing
- Electrical adapter/converter

WHAT WE DON'T RECOMMEND

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





RULES OF THE ROAD

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

DITT 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 DITT 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 the others in your group. 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 DITT 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 and as a member of a traveling community, every 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 summer programs. Take their advice!

Israel is hot—
drink extra water
every day!

Prepare to be dirty and
sweaty a lot, so avoid
clothing you do not want
to risk ruining.

Take a lot
of pictures
(of people
and places)!

step outside of your
comfort zone—e.g.
“get ready for salad
for breakfast.”

Prepare yourself and
your parents for minimal
communication over the course
of the trip
(that's part of the fun!)

Go with the flow—
things in Israel are
a lot less structured
than in America...
learn to love it!

Keep a journal
or document your
experience online!

Plan to wear
sunscreen and
bring a comfortable
hat—you won't be
given a choice!

Don't overpack—
you have to schlep
your own bags!

Again, drink
a TON of
water!!





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