



Heart of the Holy Land
ISRAEL 2018
Uncommon Spiritual Retreats

Women's Retreat June 19-30
Men's Retreat Sept 11-22
Couple's Retreat Oct 16-27

The Concept

Tours to Israel are nothing new and have been available for decades with millions of people taking advantage of them. The usual approach taken by the operators that run the majority of these tours is to:

- show as many places as possible...
- to as many people as possible...
- in the shortest time possible.

Inevitably, by the end of the tour, one has seen many places, but not much has been truly experienced that can actually impact the heart.

On the contrary, the heart of **Uncommon Spiritual Retreats** is to provide a safe space for you to rest and reflect upon the Scriptures, while being in the midst of where it all happened.

Over the years, **Uncommon Spiritual Retreats** has come to understand that for a real connection to be made that will affect the visitor long after they leave Israel, time is required. Limiting the places visited to the ones that are truly relevant to the faith of those in attendance, gives time to reflect and hear from the voice of God within

our hearts. This is done as we sit amongst the very places where Jesus walked and shared with others.

Another huge advantage to our **Uncommon Spiritual Retreats** is that we take no more than **16 guests** for the **Men's & Women's Retreats** and up to **30 guests** for the **Couple's Retreat**. Having a smaller number will encourage personal nourishment that enhance opportunities to develop relationships with those in the group and also enables the group to move quickly throughout the day.

Our professional guide will be present to give historical facts about each site that we visit. **Pablo Giacobelli & Kevin DeVries** will share practical facts/stories that will help us consider things never thought of before about that particular place or event to heighten our awareness of God's presence in sacred places. These short messages will also, at times, be followed by simple exercises/discussions that will enable us to better engage with our hearts and minds what we are seeing and hearing as we tour the Holy Land.

Story Hour

Opportunities to share at different stages of the tour will be available to everyone, thus creating the real opportunity for a small community to form. Most evenings will include Story Hour. Everyone will have an opportunity to tell their story during this time. Stories are 30 minutes long and usually tell us two to three things: What was/is your family/spiritual life like, and who has impacted you the most for better or worse? We encourage every Storyteller to share something they've never shared before if they can. Afterwards, each member of the group has an opportunity to pursue the original glory rather than police the original sin of the person who just shared their story. We believe safe people in a sacred space can hear and heal with honor from Him. We also record these words of affirmation on the Storyteller's smart phone so when they return home they have a reminder of who they really are. We believe the shortest distance between the truth and the human heart is the power of a vulnerable and transparent story. More about why we do what we do can be found @ Grace Explorations - Our Values [HERE](#).

Finally, it is very common for tour groups to leave more tired than when they first arrived. It is **Uncommon Spiritual Retreats** belief that it is important to be given a chance to rest and restore. We will focus on quality instead of quantity of sites, with reflection and

conversation encouraged at each meaningful site versus racing across the country to each and every site.

We hope you can join us for an uncommon experience of Israel. We believe it will help you to relive and experience not just the Biblical and historical sites, but most importantly, the very life of the One who made them historical and relevant in the very beginning of our modern Christianity, and along the way make some very good friends by the end of the trip.

Planned sites to visit:

Jerusalem

- Garden of Gethsemane
- Mount of Olives
- Crucifixion and burial site of Christ
- City of David including Hezekiah's Tunnels
- King David's burial site
- Mt Zion
- Room of The Last Supper
- Via Dolorosa (Jesus's route to the cross)
- Caiaphas House
- Bethlehem
- Israel Museum (home of the original copy of the Book of Isaiah)

Galilee Region

- The Sea of Galilee (Lake Tiberius) boat ride
- Mount Arbel where Jesus prayed all night
- Site of the Feeding of the 5000
- Synagogue near Mt. Arbel that Jesus visited
- Jesus' real baptismal site in the Jordan River
- Capernaum
- Sermon on the Mount
- 4x4ing in the Galilee and Golan Heights Region

Dead Sea

- Masada (Herod's Palace site)
- Qumran (discovery site of the Dead Sea Scrolls)
- Dead Sea soak and float

Haifa

- Caesarea
- Elijah's Cave

Nazareth

- Mount of Transfiguration
- Mount Precipice
- Valley of Jezreel
- Synagogue where Jesus announced his ministry
- Site where Jesus turned water into wine at the wedding in Cana
- Armageddon site
- The Gospel Trail walk

You Provide:

Airfare: Please schedule your flight to arrive @ Ben Gurion International Airport, Tel Aviv, Wednesday evening before our retreat begins on Thursday @ 9:00am. Please schedule your flight to depart Ben Gurion International Airport, Tel Aviv after 1:00pm on the last Saturday of the Israel Tour and after 9:00pm the following Monday for the optional Jordan Tour.

Please make your Wednesday night pre retreat hotel reservation with Avia Hotel & Resort Tel Aviv (a short taxi ride from the airport) and meet in the lobby with your luggage on Thursday @ 9:00 am.

Passport: (Must be valid for at least 6 months, please check it's status immediately), money for incidentals, official documents and medications - be sure these elements are current, legal and applicable for the length of the trip. Medications can be difficult to acquire out of country. Most items are available in Israel however, if you have any special medicines that you need to take, please make sure that you bring an adequate supply to last the entire time you are in Israel.

Travel insurance: This is highly recommended and should come with medical coverage, as you will be responsible for any medical expenses you have. Please purchase your **Travel Insurance [HERE](#)** to protect your significant, spiritual investment in your life. Please make sure your policy coverage amount not only covers your Israel Tour (\$3250.00) but also the Single Occupancy Option (\$750.00) and or

Jordan Tour Option (\$750.00) amounts in addition to your projected airfare amount which historically ranges anywhere from \$750.00-\$1500.00 pp. The Travel Guard Gold Policy is the most popular policy. Please read carefully what is included and excluded in your policy including the optional Cancel for Any Reason additional coverage conditions. Travel Insurance typically costs 5-10% of the investment amount you are insuring based on age and length of days traveling.

Peace of Mind:

We will do all we can to have an enjoyable and safe trip. However, all prudent and experienced travelers know that leaving copies of your documents and emergency contact information with your family is very important. **We also recommend taking a picture of your passport on your smart phone as an extra measure of precaution.**

Please notify your bank and credit card company of your international travel plans to avoid having your account temporarily suspended due to unauthorized foreign transactions. **Please pack an extra set of clothes in your carry on** in the event of airline delays or misplaced luggage.

A Unique Journey:

This trip will have all sorts of folks on it. If you are expecting a typical busload of 50 older folks, largely from the same background, who might not be able to get around well, this is *not* that trip. If you are expecting folks who might have narrow faith and dogma perspectives or people who live content with shallow relationships, this is *not* that trip. If you want hustle here and there or be a passive observer or do a missions trip, this is *not* that trip.

We want you to know, this "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity", ***is*** about:

- Seeing and experiencing the incredible sights, sounds, smells and tastes of Israel
- Quality over quantity
- Personal process and learning
- Relationships with others
- Expanding our depth of understanding about the region and our hearts.
- Reflecting on the faith that came out of that region, and...

- Being encouraged deeply in our faith.

Our group will come from different denominations, faith perspectives and cultures. Our group will have those who enjoy good food and drink of all kinds. Please understand this is a foreign experience and the music, dance, art, foods and habits of a foreign culture are a part of what we will experience. Come prepared to involve your heart, stretch yourself, and connect.

This trip *is* about refreshment and renewal. You might join Pablo, Kevin and others for a nice Cuban cigar, a song or two, or a glass of fine Israeli wine under the stars after Story Hour or dinner whichever comes last. You might not. You might join others on a morning run, walk or coffee along a beach. You might not. You might like some time of solitude, or practice early morning contemplative prayer with Pablo before breakfast or sleep-in a little, or not. All we ask is that you come with an open mind, heart, and you are willing to have fun and reflect. Everything on our Uncommon Spiritual Retreats is optional and nothing is compulsory.

Finally, this trip *is* about personal growth. We will laugh and cry together and share our stories as we live with each other for 10 days and learn about Jesus and our selves like never before.

As for us...we can't wait. Be prepared to be amazed!

Pablo Giacoppelli - Uncommon Spiritual Retreats
Kevin DeVries – Grace Explorations LLC