

TRAVEL ESSENTIALS

TRAVEL INSURANCE: Travel insurance is generally NOT included in tour pricing. You can be out a substantial amount of money if you forego purchasing travel insurance and find that you must cancel - even a couple of months prior to your departure date. We recommend that you seriously consider purchasing a good travel insurance policy within 10-14 days of your initial trip deposit. Typically, this will allow you to include a Pre-Existing Medical Condition Exclusion Waiver in your coverage. Quality travel insurance will cover trip cancellations or interruptions; injury or accident; loss of, damage to, or theft of luggage; and medical insurance.

PASSPORT: Make sure you have an up-to-date passport – that will not expire within 6 months after the last day of your trip; this is essential! There is no need for a visa if you have a U.S. passport. If you don't have a passport, visit the U.S. Department of State/Bureau of Consular Affairs website at www.Travel.State.Gov. You can make a passport appointment at your local post office and Costco offers quality, inexpensive passport photos. Allow six to eight weeks for passport processing; expedited service is available for an additional fee at locations listed on the Travel.State.Gov website.

PHONE: You may not wish to have phone or internet capability at all. If so, you can make simple calls and texts using **WhatsApp**, **Skype** or **FaceTime**. From our experience, most travelers to Israel have, or more often - wish they had, an effective and affordable cell phone plan in which they could utilize their own phone for calls to and from home, as well as enjoy unlimited internet use. There are two primary ways to utilize your phone and internet in Israel.

The most stress-free and inexpensive option is to rent an Israeli SIM card that inserts into your own smartphone. *For phone use only, you can also rent an Israeli phone.* Various companies offer these products.

The second option is to use your cell phone provider's international plan. Most of these plans only charge for the days that you actually use your device, and you are able to utilize your minutes, messages, and data allowances from your domestic plan. On the downside, if you make or accept a call, listen to a voicemail, send a text, use data, or simply have apps running in the background that use data, you'll generally be charged the daily fee even if you don't use the phone. Some of the more cost-effective plans allow an allotted data amount which typically generates spotty and slow connectivity. Call your cell phone provider and ask questions. When you acquire a cost estimate, make sure to also inquire about taxes.

ADAPTERS: Power in Israel is 220V/50hz — the same as in Europe. Israel outlets have three round holes. If you need to plug in a laptop, cell phone charger, iPad charger, or a similar device, you will need a **Type H** travel plug adapter (found on Amazon). Although Israeli sockets are three-pronged, they will also accept European two-pronged **Type C** travel plug adapters. **MAKE SURE YOUR HAIR DRYERS, CURLING IRONS, FLAT IRONS, ETC. ARE 220 VOLTS or DUAL VOLTAGE.** Most, but not all, hotels provide hairdryers, but they frequently lack power. **Warning: NEVER plug a 110-volt device into Israel's 220-volt outlets without a converter.** Your item will crash and burn—sometimes even with a converter!