



ISRAEL 2023 NOTES

Audrey and I are very excited to have the pleasure of your company on this pilgrimage to the land of Israel. You may contact us if you have any questions at dawests@hotmail.com or Audrey 0402 309 095.

Here are some notes which may help you in your decision making and in your preparation.

The purposes of this trip are threefold:

1. To tour the land of Israel, exploring many of the sites that are mentioned in the Bible, and, as we do, unpacking the Bible passages that are written about those places – a pilgrimage. You will never read your Bible in quite the same way again!
2. To experience Israel's culture and the place of Israel and its people in the world today – understanding its significance in world history and the unfolding role that Israel has in the plan of God for the world, including the historical relationship between Australia and Israel.
3. To have amazing experiences as we swim in the Dead Sea, the Sea of Galilee, the Mediterranean, bathe in hot springs built for King Herod, visit baptism sites on the Jordan river. We will worship in English and Hebrew as we sail on the Sea of Galilee, climb Masada, visit the Western Wall, experience a village set up in Nazareth to re-create life as it was in Jesus' day, look out over Syria from the Golan Heights, take communion at the "Garden Tomb" and there will be so much more to see and do as surprises await us around every corner.

TRAVEL

Your travel arrangements to and from Tel Aviv are entirely up to you. Our experience after many trips to Israel is that most people want to make their own way there and back as each person or couple have a different wish list of other things to do before or after our tour – visit family in England, see the sights of Europe, laze in the Greek Islands, visit Petra in Jordan etc. You are free to extend your time away for as long as your own resources allow! We will meet in Tel Aviv, at the latest, the day before our tour begins, as that evening we will have a meeting and a briefing with our tour guides.

ARRIVAL

Ensure flights to TEL AVIV are booked to arrive on or before the day before our pilgrimage begins. There will be a final briefing on that evening as our pilgrimage departs at 9am the next day. Our hotel in Tel Aviv is located near the beach close to the centre of Tel Aviv. Proof of travel insurance including covid sickness insurance could be required.

At the airport, please adhere strictly to the requirements of no photography allowed. It is also strongly advised that any questions asked by the customs authorities be answered with proper decorum. Frivolity and joking is not entertained. For the Israelis, whilst they appreciate the tourist currency being brought in, border security is a daily matter of life and death. Border officials can be quite intimidating – just be truthful and have your itinerary etc on hand so you can answer their questions.

SOME PRACTICAL MATTERS

Expected temperatures:

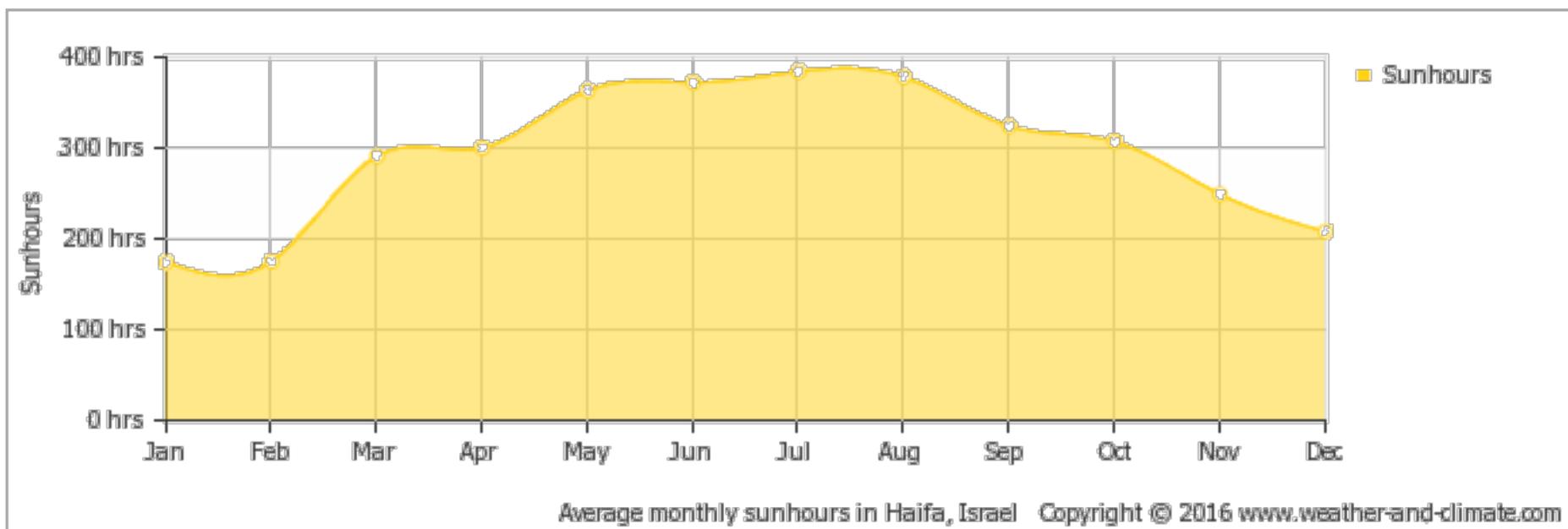
CITY	October	September
TIBERIAS	19-32 C	24-34 C
TEL AVIV	15-28 C	22-29 C
JERUSALEM	16-26 C	18-28 C
DEAD SEA	24-32 C	26-36 C
GOLAN HTS	15-26 C	18-30 C

Rainfall:

Officially the rainy season in Israel is said to kick off in October, but I don't think you'll be getting too wet in September or October, with only a rare day of rain here and there. It's only in December when the rain starts to get a little more serious. And when I mean serious, you might see 4 or 5 days of rain the whole month. Israel isn't an umbrella's worst nightmare, as you can see...but DO BE PREPARED!! The following graphs are for Tiberias in the Galilee region where we will be spending a lot of our time.

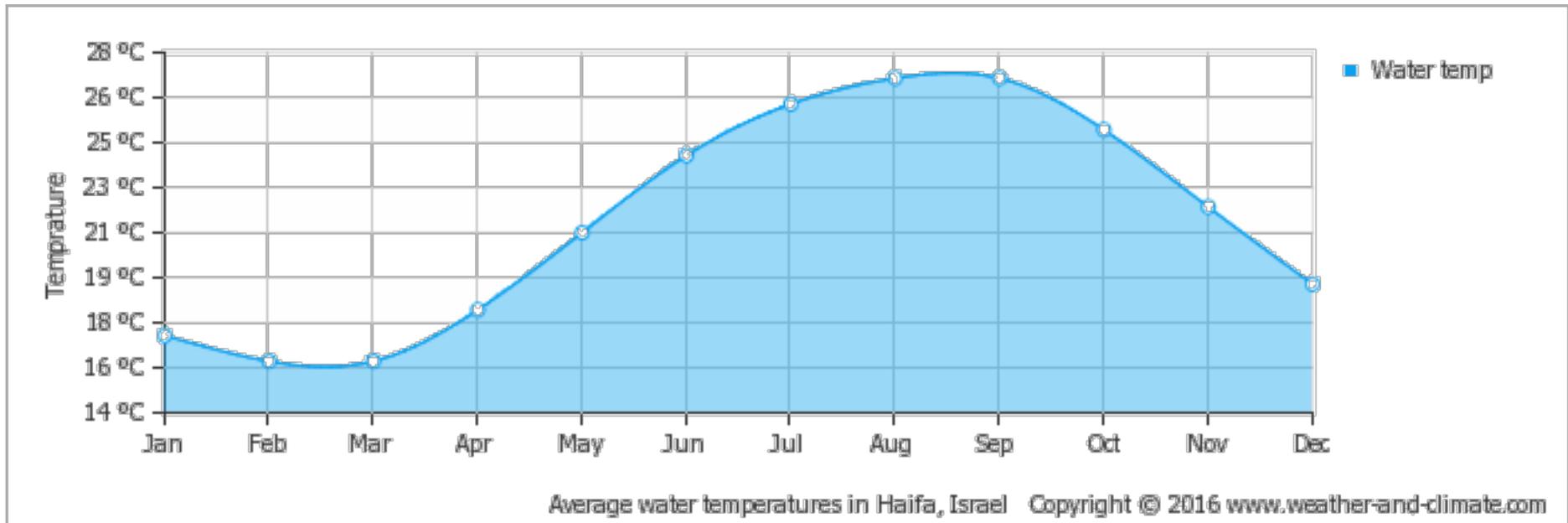
Average Hours of Sunshine:

This is the monthly total of sunshine hours



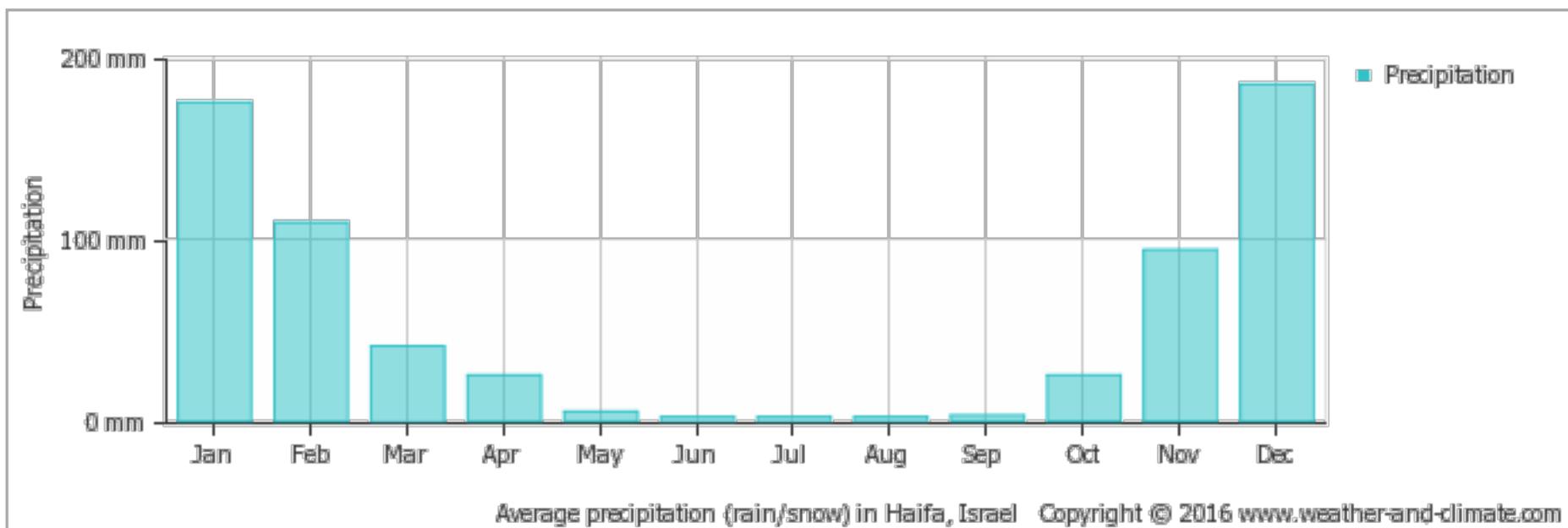
Average Water Temperature:

The monthly mean water temperature. Show in [Fahrenheit](#) »



Average Monthly Rainfall:

This is the mean monthly precipitation, including rain, snow, hail etc. Show in [Inches](#) »



Israel Shekel Exchange Rates (N.I.S)

One Australian dollar currently buys approximately 2.4 NIS (New Israeli Shekels) ie one shekel is worth around 40 cents Australian.

The Shekel

1 Shekel (N.I.S.) is 100 Agorot

Coins:

10 Shekel - 10 N.I.S.

5 Shekel - 5 N.I.S.

2 Shekel - 2 N.I.S.

1 Shekel - 1 N.I.S.

50 Agorot - 0.50 N.I.S. - 50 ag.

10 Agorot - 0.10 N.I.S. - 10 ag.

Bills:

200 Shekel - 200 N.I.S.

100 Shekel - 100 N.I.S.

50 Shekel - 50 N.I.S.

20 Shekel - 20 N.I.S.

Detailed table of distances between cities...

Eilat	Beer Sheba	Tiberias	Haifa	Tel Aviv	Jerusalem	Miles Km
(193) 309	(50) 81	(95) 152	(94) 151	(36) 58	-	Jerusalem
(220) 346	(65) 105	(83) 134	(59) 95	-	(36) 58	Tel Aviv
(273) 438	(123) 197	(43) 69	-	(59) 95	(94) 151	Haifa

(253) 405	(145) 233	-	(43) 69	(83) 134	(95) 152	Tiberias
-	(150) 241	(253) 405	(273) 438	(120) 346	(193) 309	Eilat
(305) 488	(129) 207	(18) 29	(21) 35	(63) 102	(81) 131	Nazareth
(232) 372	(81) 131	(63) 101	(41) 66	(18) 29	(53) 85	Netanya
(287) 460	(136) 219	(34) 55	(13) 22	(73) 117	(108) 173	Acre
Eilat	Beer Sheba	Tiberias	Haifa	Tel Aviv	Jerusalem	

The Transport:

The required number of people for the trip is 30. At that number we can have a full-sized coach and a driver, as well as a guide.

Seating on the coach will not be assigned each day but please be aware that some seats may have a better view or be more /less comfort than others and it is thoughtful of people to rotate those seats each day so that all have a fair turn “up the front” and “at the back”!

Physical Preparations:

1. Keep fit, walk daily. We will be doing lots of walking – especially in places like the Old City of Jerusalem.
2. Use shoes that have been broken in – don't buy new shoes. Use shoes that are practical and have excellent grip – again we have a lot of walking to do, including sometimes on very bumpy, worn cobble stone.
3. Wear light to medium summer wear but bring a jumper/jacket for the Golan Heights and for some of the cooler evenings. Also, bring something to cover your shoulders and your legs if you are wearing shorts (required for some holy sites) - a shawl, sarong, etc is ideal.
4. Bring sunglasses, sunblock, hats, swimmers, towel – there will be opportunities to swim and relax.

5. Inform your credit card provider of your travels and set up your mobile phone

<https://orao.dfat.gov.au/pages/userlogin.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fpages%2fsecured%2fdefault.aspx>

6. Register with DFAT before you leave Australia.

7. Bring some snacks if you want. (Addicted to Vegemite??? Bring your own!). All breakfasts and dinners are included, but lunch times can be flexible and are at your own cost. Middle Eastern food can be expected but Western food is readily available. The tour cost includes a bottle of water each day.

8. The Israeli government requires that your passport be valid for SIX months after entry to Israel. Australians do NOT require a visa.

9. Bring space in your luggage for purchases. I would allow \$AU 300-500, but some may want to take home special Israeli art, jewelry or pottery so may need more.

10. CRUCIAL: Buy travel insurance as soon as you purchase your flights. Check out what cover is needed in case of covid – sickness or cancellation due to restrictions

11. Bring your own medication. All medication needs to be in a bottle marked with the contents, and your name.

12. Electric sockets are the two plug, round-pin type. Please bring adapters.

13. FYI time difference Sydney/Jerusalem is 9 hours daylight saving time.

Spiritual Preparations

1. We are pilgrims, not just tourists. Be familiar with the names of the places we will visit. Read up on our sites before we go. We will provide some suggested reading.

2. Be familiar with the significance of the places we are visiting. For many sites, information about their significance will be mentioned in our devotionals before we go.
3. Brush up on the Bible background. Bible verses are connected with every place we will visit – feel free to dig deeper to get more out of each place – you will view the sites differently when you have already read the Biblical background. Conversely, your reading and understanding of the Bible will be different after seeing the sites.
4. Reflect on the Bible passages before you get there. This will enable you to get the maximum benefit from this pilgrimage.

MAPS



