

Plan an Alternative Trip to the Holy Land—Palestine and Israel

Palestine

Palestine is a unique country from all perspectives—historical, religious, and cultural. There is a rich and ancient history, including its role as home to the three monotheistic world religions: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. The Alternative Tourism Group (ATG) in Palestine invites you to come here, learn about history, religions, conflicts, culture, traditions, and so on. In this place, one can have a life experience that can never be found elsewhere.

General Comments about Travelling in Palestine

You will have to fly into Israel and travel back and forth through Israeli checkpoints to visit Palestine. Be ready to be patient and answer any questions posed by the authorities.

Visas

A valid Canadian passport is required. The passport must be valid for at least six months beyond the date of your expected departure from the country.

No visa is required for Canadians coming as tourists.

Currency

Palestine's currency is the pound, which is divided into 1,000 mills. U.S. dollars are readily accepted.

Health and Safety

Check current inoculation requirements and recommendations by visiting International Association for Medical Assistance to Travellers (IAMAT) (www.iamat.org/country_profile.cfm?id=130).

When travelling in the tropics it is important to remain hydrated. But don't drink the tap water. Bottled or purified water will be available for you. Unless water is marked "potable," assume it is not safe to drink. You should bring your own water bottle.

Be aware that in the context of extensive human rights violations there is a heightened security risk in Palestine. Canadians should maintain a high level of personal security awareness at all times. Carry important documents such as passports with you at all times.

Organizations Welcoming Groups

The Alternative Tourism Group (ATG) is a Palestinian NGO specializing in tours and pilgrimages that include critical examinations of the history, culture, and politics of the Holy Land.

Established in 1995, ATG operates according to the tenets of justice tourism, that is, tourism that holds as its central goals the creation of economic opportunities for the local community, positive cultural exchange between guest and host through one-on-one interaction, the protection of the environment, and political/historical education.

ATG works to encourage all tourism operators to abandon exploitive mass tourism and to adopt practices that positively affect the host population. Through these methods, ATG seeks to promote a positive image of Palestine and its people and to contribute to the establishment of a just peace in the area.

ATG works with a wide range of groups and delegations that include

- international solidarity groups
- academic and fact-finding delegations
- church groups concerned with social justice
- diplomats, journalists, and researchers
- NGOs and political organizations
- tourists and pilgrim groups

By choosing ATG you will gain

- a fair trip to the Holy Land
- a personal, unforgettable experience
- a meaningful encounter with the local communities

Education and Exposure

ATG can help with group planning or one-day tours. Schedules can be individualized to fit your group needs. Twice a year, campaigns that combine volunteerism and learning offer an opportunity to work with Palestinians while learning about the country. ATG also offers opportunities to participate in solidarity and advocacy programmes.

Accommodations, Meals, and Transportation

All travel details, from accommodation to tour guides to tour buses, can be pre-arranged by ATG.

Fees

The cost of the program including accommodation, meals, and local transportation will vary depending on the program. An average that might be anticipated is about 400 Euros (about CDN\$550). This does not include travel to Palestine or travel from and to the airport.

For more information, contact Alternative Tourism Group (www.patg.org).